Glad Tidings

January/February 2001

INSIDE:

Middle East Melange
Catherine of Bora
It All Began in Hungary...

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Cover Photo: See page 47 for information.

Correction: The Cuba puzzle on page 17, Sept/Oct 2000 was incorrectly credited. It was done by Sheila Paterson, Dalkeith, ON.

Glad Tidings

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GLAD TIDINGS reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

GLAD TIDINGS challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally and internationally.

GLAD TIDINGS through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired and motivated to action.

GLAD TIDINGS provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS (WD) or by the Editor.

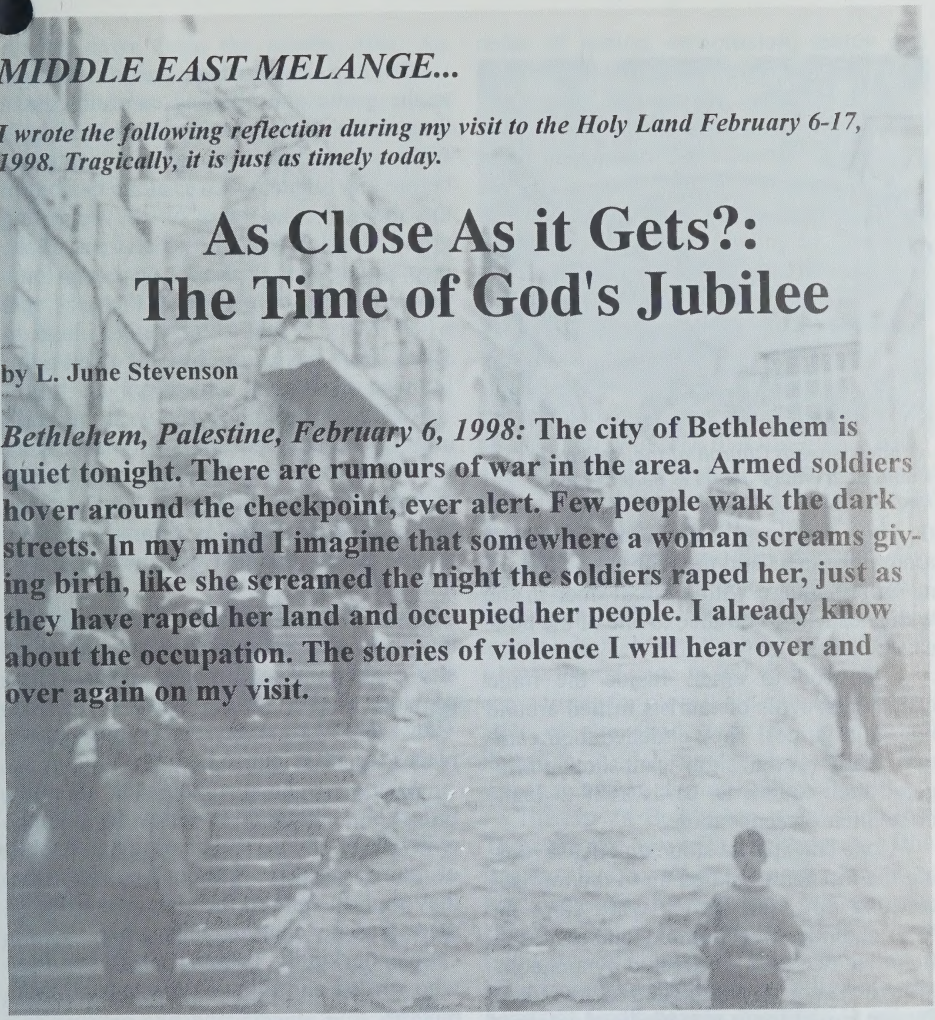
MIDDLE EAST MELANGE...

I wrote the following reflection during my visit to the Holy Land February 6-17, 1998. Tragically, it is just as timely today.

As Close As it Gets?: The Time of God's Jubilee

by L. June Stevenson

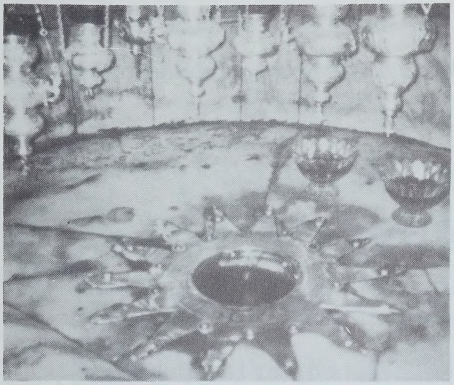
Bethlehem, Palestine, February 6, 1998: **The city of Bethlehem is quiet tonight. There are rumours of war in the area. Armed soldiers hover around the checkpoint, ever alert. Few people walk the dark streets. In my mind I imagine that somewhere a woman screams giving birth, like she screamed the night the soldiers raped her, just as they have raped her land and occupied her people. I already know about the occupation. The stories of violence I will hear over and over again on my visit.**



- Bethlehem street leads down to the manger.

I am finally in my hotel in the centre of Bethlehem. The security check at the Tel Aviv airport was uncomfortable. I was asked to wait to be questioned further. Why are you here? I am a tourist. Are you traveling alone? Yes. Are you carrying any weapons? No. Any gifts for anyone? No. Did anyone ask you to bring in anything? No. Who do you know? Nobody. What will you be visiting? The holy places. Will you be visiting any local people in their homes? No. Where are you staying? The Bethlehem Grand Hotel. Why are you staying in Bethlehem? That is where the manger is.

February 7: I walked easily from my hotel to Manager Square. I hadn't really believed Khalid, the proprietor, when he said just to hang a left at the bottom of the street and work my way down the cobbled streets. But there it was. After I pushed



-Grotto beneath Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem where Jesus is said to have been born.

through the local cars honking to get around the taxis and the tour buses, I faced an empty square with a small door in the wall ahead. The entrance to one of the holiest of places.

I stooped to enter. Inside the huge chamber, crowds of tourists milled around their tour guides. They clutched their cameras, ready for that significant shot and fingered their tour I. D. cards as if to legitimize their presence there.

Alone and apart, I stood quietly, savouring the moment. I sidled up to the tourists, catching now and then a word from the female guide. She pointed out a mosaic floor that had been uncovered by archeologists. It was centuries old and looked like a Persian carpet but it was made of coloured stones. As the crowd moved away I took a picture.

One after one the guide pointed out the silver and gold artifacts adorning the altar, explaining their history. Then the group moved towards *the place*. The guide's voice dropped to an audible whisper. She explained how this site of Jesus' birth was considered the most accurate. The local people remembered, she said, and the word was passed on by mouth through the centuries. *This is as close as it gets,* she stated.

Bending, I entered the narrow entrance to the grotto and climbed carefully down the uneven steps, worn by the feet of thousands of pilgrims through the centuries, before me. Suddenly I was alone in front of the manger. The hum of the retreating group mingled with the quiet steps of the incoming group. I stood reverently for a moment then knelt to touch the very spot where Mary is said to have given birth to Jesus. Tears welled up. My chest felt tight. I bowed my head in a silent prayer.

And I pondered how the western world might have adorned this holy place. Here there was no Disney World atmosphere, no entrance fee, no charge to kneel at the manger and pay homage. Adoration is free, as free as the love that was born here two thousand years ago.

Here, where there was no room at the inn, there was always room in a cave or a stable. Stables were important places. They provided shelter for the beasts of burden. They were warm, cozy places, appropriate places for a Saviour to be born.

Afterwards I sat at the altar in quiet reflection, taking in the crowds, without really seeing them, and hearing that babble of many languages without knowing what they said. In spite of the elaborate artifacts there was no commercialism here, just a couple of kindly priests selling candles, who smiled and allowed me to take their picture.

Later I had lunch outside, across from the square. The smell of gas from the tour buses filled my nostrils and the persistent honking of horns filled my ears. Children chattered and ran around playfully. Local women passed carrying their grocery bags of pita bread, Jaffa oranges, eggplant and tomatoes.

I pictured the scene as it might have been on that night. The neon star in the square faded and a brilliant light shone over the place where Jesus lay. Shepherds

hurried down from the nearby hills. An angel herald had startled them with these words, "Do not be afraid. I bring you news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11a). They were not to fear, the guide had told her group, as they might have feared the coming of a king, a king like Herod. Rather, they were to witness the birth of their Savior.

Back at the hotel, there are rumours of protests in Bethlehem, Jerusalem and in Hebron. When we visit there later in the week, we will be going into the dragon's mouth, a new arrival says.

It is raining tonight in Bethlehem, a warm, gentle rain. A fog rolls in, cloaking the night in mystery and uneasiness.

February 9: The conference begins with a tour of the Sea of Galilee. So I am not a tourist after all. I am here on a more sinister mission, to see for myself the rape and occupation of the Palestinian land. The conference is organized by Sabeel, an ecumenical liberation theology movement, which encourages individuals and groups from around the world to work for a just, comprehensive, and enduring peace informed by truth and empowered by prayer and action. 'Sabeel' is Arabic for 'the way' and also a 'channel' or 'spring' of life-giving water.

Speakers and participants will discuss the theme: The Challenge of Jubilee. What Does God Require? Throughout the year of 1998 the State of Israel will celebrate fifty years of statehood while the Palestinian people will remember fifty years of dispossession and tragedy. It is time for peace in the land.

As the year 2000 approaches, when Christians around the world will celebrate the birth of Christ, there is no more peace in Bethlehem than there was then. It is time to call for the re-establishing of God's holy order of justice, compassion, mercy and forgiveness: "good news to the poor ...release of the captives...recovery of sight to the blind...let the oppressed go free...proclaim the year of God's favour" (Luke 4:18 NRSV).

The journey that began in the city of Nazareth with Joseph leading his pregnant wife on a donkey, did not end in a stable in Bethlehem. It wound its way through the lives and hearts of the people of Palestine, through its tiny villages, and finally into Jerusalem where there was a cross and a grave nearby. It continues today in the hearts of all who seek that life-giving water and who believe in the vision of Jubilee that Jesus announced in the temple in Nazareth (Luke 4:14-20).

When I return to the airport in Tel Aviv, they will ask where I have been and what I have seen. Will I act like just one more tourist who has seen the holy sites? Or will I have the courage to tell them the truth: I came to see for myself the rape and possession of the land and the peoples of Palestine. And I came to help move forward the vision of God's Jubilee.

The city of Bethlehem is quiet tonight. There are rumours of war in the area. In the sky the stars come out, one after the other. For those who have eyes to see, one star shines brighter. It is the star of hope and faith. It is the light of the world that will not be extinguished as long as it lives in the hearts of God's people. It is time to act on that hope and that faith. God's time. The time of God's Jubilee.

As this magazine is prepared (December 2000) the situation in the Middle East commands the world's attention. Daily reports indicate increasing violence. Marjorie Ross, of International Missions, Life and Mission Agency, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, visited East Jerusalem and the West Bank October 11-16. Portions of her report follow:

Interspersed with Marjorie's observations are quotes from various sources that have crossed my desk in recent weeks. They are presented with no bias for either Israel or Palestine, simply as representative of what some media sources have been carrying. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has for many years supported the efforts of Palestinian Christians through the coalition InterChurch Action. Editor

Visit to East Jerusalem and the West Bank, October 11 - 16, 2000

by Marjorie Ross

I represent InterChurch Action (an ecumenical coalition) on the Core Group of the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees (DSPR). This is a program of the Middle East Council of Churches which came into being in 1950 to provide assistance (clinics, vocational training, scholarships etc.) to Palestinian refugees in Gaza, Jordan and Lebanon, and to Palestinians living in the West Bank and within Israel. It is supported by church relief and development agencies in Europe, North America, and Australia and New Zealand. PWS&D. The United Church and the Anglican Church have provided grants to this programme over the past twenty years which have been matched by C.I.D.A.

The regularly scheduled meeting of the DSPR Core Group was to take place in Amman, Jordan on October 10-11. My intention was to travel to East Jerusalem on October 12 to prepare to receive the five participants of the FLAMES (PCC) tour to the Holy Land the following week.

However, the rapidly deteriorating situation in the West Bank and Gaza following the visit of Israeli politician Ariel Sharon to the Al Aksa Mosque on September 28 changed these plans. The Palestinian Christians who are our partners in DSPR from the West Bank, Gaza and the Galilee had already been in Jordan for two days of meetings prior to the Core Group meeting, and were very anxious to return to their families. Accordingly, the agenda was compressed from two days to one.

In the mainstream British press, we can at last read that "If Palestinians were black, Israel would now be a pariah state subject to economic sanctions...." **Naom Chomsky, Al-Ahram**

If I were a Palestinian, I'd also join a terror group. **- Ehud Barak**

The representatives of the partner groups from Europe decided to postpone their consultations, but to carry on with their plan to go to East Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza and Israel to meet with as many of [their partner] groups as possible, to hear their views of the current situation. They invited me to join them.

We travelled to Jerusalem via the Allenby Bridge on October 11, and followed an intensive schedule of meetings for the next five days.

Several of the groups and individuals with whom we met are regularly contacted by the BBC and other media as articulate and thoughtful representatives of Palestinian opinion. One was leaving just after our interview to be part of the Palestinian team at the specially called United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva October 16-17.

The group of outside partners was divided into four teams, one each going to Gaza, Galilee, Bethlehem and Beit Sahour (south of Jerusalem) and to Ramallah and Beit Hanina (north of Jerusalem).

Jorg Isert of Bread for the World and myself made up this last pair. We arrived in Ramallah about ten minutes after the death by mob violence of the two Israeli policemen, and a panic was setting in as

***Let us not ignore the truth among ourselves...politically, we are the aggressors and they defend themselves.* - David Ben Gurion**

people tried to get out of the city. A helpful Palestinian policeman saw us trying vainly to get a cab and persuaded the driver of a private car to drive us to the checkpoint on the outside of town. (He bypassed the traffic jam by driving most of the way on the shoulder on the wrong side of the road.) Subsequently, we were able to meet with the groups in Beit Hanina, and also with the administration of the famous Lutheran hospital in Jerusalem, Augusta Victoria.

The visit to the south of Jerusalem was curtailed because the two staff people concerned were ordered to return home by their governments. They were able to give us their impressions by phone. After the visits, we met together in Jerusalem to share what we had heard.

Marjorie's personal summary, mainly affirmed by the group's official report, included, among others, the following points:

- People had seen this uprising coming. The visit of Ariel Sharon was the spark to the tinder, which had been accumulating for years. We often read that the Palestinians are frustrated by the slowness of the peace process. In fact, we were told that the Oslo process is generally assumed on the Palestinian side to be dead. The process was always very flawed, and even the few gains it offered were more than offset by the realities on the ground - the relentless growth of settlements and access roads which carve the territory of the West Bank up into little Bantustans, the continued oppressive Israeli presence, the limited economic opportunities.

-The last three weeks have been qualitatively different from anything that has happened since the start of the peace process. This is no temporary flare-up, and there is no going back to where things were prior to September 28.

- Palestinians are very much aware that the struggle is one for international opinion. Those we were talking with (some of the "intellectuals" in Palestinian society) deplore mob violence, for its own sake, but also because they know how badly it reflects on them. The lynching, the destruction of Joseph's tomb in Nablus and the burning of the synagogue in Jericho came up many times, always with strong expressions of regret.

-.Several people pleaded that the outside world, especially people like ourselves who put a high premium on balance and objectivity, should avoid the tendency to lump it all together - to say that there is violence on both sides, and all that matters is to stop it. Even one death, or one torching of a religious building, is one too many. Yet the statistics show how lopsided the violence has been. These people find international media references to a war to be highly misleading because it implies two comparable adversaries. This conflict pits a highly sophisticated and well-equipped army against a "non army" consisting of half trained policemen with light weapons and teenagers throwing stones.

***More than seven years have gone by, and Israel has security and administrative control of 61.2 percent of the West Bank, and about 20 percent of the Gaza Strip, and security control over another 26.8 percent of the West Bank.* - Amira Hass**

The same God rules the Arab heart who rules the Jewish heart.
- Gandhi, 1938

- The leaders of NGOs and human rights groups to whom we spoke were very concerned that some leadership would emerge. Several times we were told, "People don't know where they are going". Several felt that since the political Palestinian Authority was showing very little leadership, it had gone by default to young men on the street and the Tanzim (the lightly armed faction of the Fatah, Arafat's party). Others were concerned about the drift towards describing the conflict as a religious struggle, since that would play into the hands of Hamas. Many felt that "intellectuals" and moderate people of stature should either try to intervene with the Palestinian Authority to provide leadership, or to provide leadership themselves.

- We heard from human rights groups on the West Bank and B'tselem in Israel that the independent enquiry into the origins of the present crisis is very important. (This is what Arafat did not achieve at Sharm el-Sheikh). The possibility of a visit by Mary Robinson, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, was very much welcomed. The role being played by Kofi Annan, and the increased involvement of the United Nations is seen as being a hopeful sign. The Palestinians want Europe and other countries to become more involved in mediation processes. South Africa was mentioned more than once as a country that could share its own experience. Despite President Clinton's attempts to be seen as an honest broker, the U.S. remains very much in Israel's corner. For this reason, the U.S. abstention on the Security Council's resolution 1322 last week was seen as a real breakthrough.

- The human rights groups emphasized the importance of building support on both sides of the conflict for the acceptance of international law, binding on both sides. Over and over we heard that adherence to international law (as expressed in the U.N. resolutions 242 and 338 and the Fourth Geneva Convention) was the only just and lasting basis for peace and mutual co-existence.

- The Oslo Agreements have never seemed to the Palestinians as anything more than a very bad bargain. Some saw it as the best that could be hoped for; others see it as so hopelessly compromised and limited that it would not prove sustainable. The majority of people said Oslo should be scrapped, and the peace process begin again on a sounder basis.

- Many people who have been long involved in dialogue with Israelis at forums, on panels etc., expressed strong disappointment at the very muted voice of the Israeli peace groups, most of whom have not been able to go beyond deploring the violence "on both sides".

- The short answer to the question, "What do the Palestinians want?" is: a return to the 1967 borders, giving them their own state with all that that implies in the West Bank and Gaza; no settlements; East Jerusalem with guarantees for Israel concerning access to the Jewish holy places; the right of return for refugees.

- I will perhaps remember longest the conversation with the executive director of B'tselem, the highly respected (outside

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, May they prosper who love her."
(Psalm 122:6)

Israel) human rights group in West Jerusalem. When asked if he did not feel terribly isolated in his position, he said, "In most countries, a person like me who criticizes his government is expressing the opinions of many others who do not feel they can speak out. That person may be endangered, but he is also regarded as a hero. In Israel, when I say what I do about the practices of our army, I am regarded as a traitor. I stay in this work because I cannot be silent in the face of the injustices which my government commits in my name."

In my absence, the Middle East Working Group of InterChurch Action, of which I am the chairperson, wrote to Prime Minister Chretien, commending the Canadian government for supporting U.N. resolution 1322, and emphasizing the necessity of pursuing a new peace process based on international law. It calls on the Canadian government to work with European and Middle Eastern countries to bring a new dynamic to the mediation process. Everything that I heard in my visit to East Jerusalem and the West Bank endorses this position.

The two peoples of the Holy Land are at a critical point in their history. Please remember them in your prayers.

It is clear that among the many things you and I can do for our brothers and sisters in the Middle East, several actions stand out:

1. Pray, both privately and publicly. Groups are encouraged to hold special prayer services, preferably ecumenical, for the end of the present tragedy and for a just peace to be established.

***Palestinian hospital officials say some 7,000 Palestinians have been wounded in the violence, more than 40 percent of them under the age of 18.* - Reuters**

***Violence has killed at least 228 people, nearly 90 percent of them Arabs, in seven weeks.* - Reuters**

2. Commend the Canadian government for its support for UN resolution 1322 which affirms, "that a just and lasting peace solution to the Arab and Israeli conflict must be based on its resolutions 242 and 338, through an active negotiating process." These UN resolutions constitute the only basis on which to negotiate a sustainable peace settlement. Urge the government to provide a framework for a solution through a process of implementing a just peace founded on UN resolutions and other legitimate international agreements. Press Israel to stop military ooperations and attacks against unarmed civilians in accordance with the fourth Geneva Conventions.

3. Share this information with family and friends.

4. Contact the media to ask for a balanced and accurate coverage of the situation.

Editor's Note: As this is being prepared to go to press (end of November), word has just been received that a letter has been drafted: *Canadian Christian Leaders' Call for Peace with Justice in the Middle East*. It is expected that leaders, including Presbyterian moderator Rev. Glen Davis, will sign it.

The letter calls for "a dialogue to create a Jerusalem that is open and accessible to the people of the three faiths that hold it sacred". It commends the Government of Canada for the humanitarian assistance it has provided to the victims of violence, and calls on Canadian Christians to pray for the two peoples of the Holy Land.

After the Ecumenical Decade: *How will you answer my daughter's questions?*

by Anne Saunders

The Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women in Church and Society ended two years ago. When I consider our denomination at both the national and congregational level I wonder if our church has returned to its comfortable pre-decade male clergy domination and exclusiveness...?

With only one woman and no lay person candidate (out of 18) for moderator in the last four years, without any real voice for youth and young adults in our congregations or courts, and without any acceptance of the equality of gays and lesbians, I am left sadly thinking that our church is unable and unwilling to provide spiritually for many, many people.

At the congregational level I am hearing once again biblical women being noted for their sinful behaviour rather than for their faithfulness and discipleship; and I am hearing once again, almost exclusively, exclusive language. Indeed one male member of the clergy dared to say recently that the Bible has only two examples of feminine imagery for God. While I know this is debatable, many of the faithful Presbyterians in the pews around me now believe there is really no biblical basis for a maternal image of God.

I have never emphasized inclusive language though I have always tried to use it. Inclusive language simply makes sense if I want to speak and write in ways that don't exclude people, and if I want to enable people to establish a closer relationship with God. When I hear that Jesus spoke to men and women, I do feel more included and I am more challenged to respond. When I hear a variety of images used for God, I do experience God's presence and God's love in a more powerful sense.

I don't remember speaking to my daughter about God's gender. After all I am not a feminist; and I am not a biblical scholar. As a person, I am committed to social justice for all regardless of gender, race, religion, economic status, mental or physical ability, or sexuality. As a Christian, I believe in a God that encompasses all that is compassionate, loving, and just. No doubt over the years my daughter has heard words and has seen actions that demonstrated my beliefs.

Still it catches me by surprise when my daughter corrects me on a point of theology. She was about three years old the first time. Together in the car, as I drove I sang one of my favourite hymns (at the time I didn't know the wonderful inclusive version, 'This is God's wondrous world'. I was happily singing, "This is my Father's world..."

"Mother's", my daughter voice came from the back seat.

"Yes, dear?", I asked.

"No, Mother's...you know Mother's world." She patiently explained.

"Ah, oh, yes, dear...of course."

"Why don't you sing 'This is my Mother's world'?" She asked innocently.

And what is the "correct" answer to that question?

I guess I didn't answer it correctly because a couple of years later, my daughter corrected me again. We had been talking about our relationship, when my daughter proudly announced that, in fact, she had five mothers: me, her two grand-

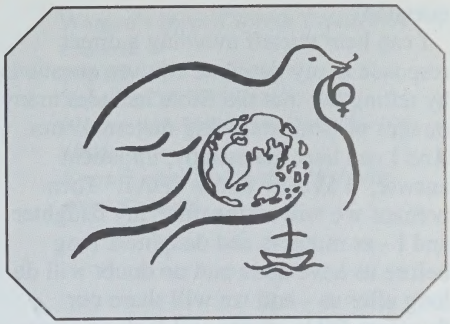
mothers, her birth mother, and God! And what is the "correct" reply to that statement?

My daughter is now 11 years old. She likes to tell me about God's limitless existence, correcting me if I speak of God being with her. She says that God is in everything and is everything. She has been part of a Presbyterian congregation for 10 years.

For four summers she has gone away for two weeks at Ontario Pioneer Camp with daily Bible study. She knows her Bible well and has some favourite biblical characters like Moses, Esther, Daniel, and Ruth. During the school year she came to Sunday school regularly, until about two years ago. Since then her attendance has been sporadic. She attends mainly the term that I teach her age group or when she can help with the toddlers. Sometimes I have volunteered in the nursery with her and I have observed how hard she works to care for and entertain the young ones, feeling very good about herself and her ability to share God's love. Rarely does she join in the Sunday worship - she says she can't sit that long, the music drags, there's too much talk, it gets too hot... These are familiar comments to me. I've heard them all before from members of the youth class I taught for a few years whenever I encouraged them to sit through a special worship service.

My daughter is not even a teenager, but she no longer feels she fits the normal Sunday morning worship and education programs of our congregation. Can any of these activities remind her of God's love for her and in her the way involvement in the nursery does?

When my daughter is "old enough" to sit still, tolerate the music, and listen to the talk, what will she find in our weekly worship that will resonate with the God she loves and serves? Will she find a non-



judgmental God who accepts and loves her and her friends completely as individuals-with all their weaknesses and strengths, their emotional struggles and successes?

Her friends include Mamoud, Gifty, Ryan, Serothy, Asvini, and Jane. In the coming years among her friends we may find gays or lesbians. Will my daughter learn that people have to grow up in a certain way and express their faith with certain words to be accepted completely, to be truly included, in a Presbyterian congregation and denomination?

One day in the future my daughter may ask me, "Why is it that in our worship services the minister talks of God as rock, light, refuge, fortress, creator, shepherd, and father, but not as mother?"

And what will be the "correct" answer to this question?

While the Bible was written by men in male-dominated societies, and maternal images are few (actually paternal images of God are also few in the Old Testament), yet there are several of them in the Bible.

Why do some people say that this isn't so? With this denial we focus on only some images and, therefore, on only some aspects of God; we omit other images and limit our understanding of God. I am left wondering if our worship services rarely draw on these images because of the continuing domination of male clergy in our denomination...?

And what is the correct answer to that

question?

I can hear myself avoiding a direct response to my daughter's future questions by telling her that the Bible includes many images of God, including maternal ones. And I can hear her snappy, impatient answer, "I already know THAT." Then perhaps we will sit together, my daughter and I - as mothers and daughters long before us have done and no doubt will do long after us - and we will share our favourite Bible stories and look up some of the scriptures that describe the maternal characteristics of God. And in those moments we will experience God who gives birth to all we are becoming, who nurtures us and comforts us - God our Father and our Mother, in whose image my daughter and I are made.

Some Related Biblical Passages

Genesis 1:27, Genesis 5:1-2 (both male and female created in the image of God)
Deuteronomy 32:11 (mother eagle)
Deuteronomy 32: 18 (birthing)
Job 38:29 (womb-endowed Creator)
Psalm 22:9 (midwife)
Psalm 131:2-3 (mother's arms)
Isaiah 42:14 (a woman birthing)
Isaiah 49:15 (a woman caring for her own baby)
Isaiah 66:13 (a mother comforting her child)
Hosea 13:8 (a mother bear)
Matthew 23:37 and Luke 13:34 (a mother hen)

About the Decade

At the initiative of the World Council of Churches, the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women in Church and Society was launched at Easter 1988.

The Decade was conceived as a rallying point for action by churches to overcome teachings and practices that hinder inclusive community. It aims to empower women to challenge oppressive structures, to affirm contributions women are already making to their churches and communities and to give new visibility to women's perspectives on all the critical issues churches face.

Remember Groundswell? Newsletter of the Ecumenical Decade: Churches in Solidarity with Women? For the 10 years of the Decade, 1988-1998, Groundswell kept its pulse on what was happening in Canada and around the world. With the close of the Decade there have been some changes. The Decade office, housed with the Canadian Council, of Churches, closed up and its new manifestation opened in the offices of the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada (WICC). WICC agreed to incorporate into its structure a new committee to oversee the work and staff to coordinate: Ecumenical Network for Women's Justice. The primary concerns were to continue to nurture the networks begun in the past decade, including a newsletter as a tool of that networking, and to follow up on directions coming out of daring Hope and Harare. (Harare, Zimbabwe was the setting for the international Decade Festival.)

MAKING waves
An ecumenical feminist journal

Making Waves: Volume 1:1, Fall 2000 is now out. This 'daughter of Groundswell" brings together the goals of the Ecumenical Decade and the Women's

Inter-Church Council on ecumenism, social justice, women's issues and spirituality. Making Waves is available to members of WICC and the Ecumenical Network for Women's Justice. To join the network and receive this quarterly publication, please send a donation (of $20or more) to:

Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada
394 Bloor St W Ste 201
Toronto ON M5S 1X4
Phone: 416-929-5184; Fax: 416-929-4064
E-mail: wicc@wicc.org; Website: www.wicc.org

Am I Ready?

Oh, Saviour, when you come for me
And call me to your side,
Shall I reveal my face to you
Or run away and hide?

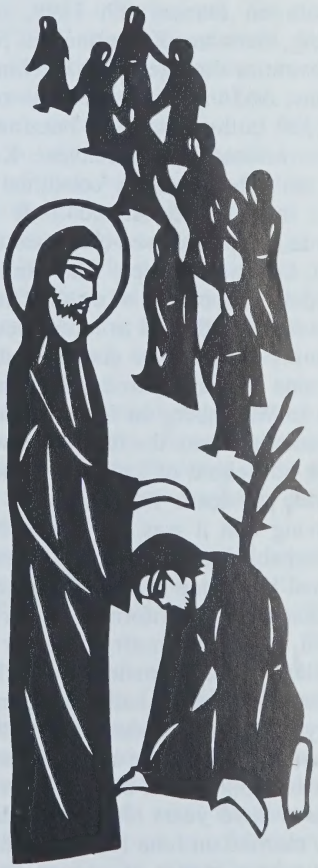
Will you ask me what I've done
In all my days on earth;
Did I love my neighbour as myself
Since my re-birth?

Did I show kindness to the poor
Was I gentle with my son;
Have patience with the elderly
Tell someone of your Son?

Did I judge, encourage, love or hate
Greet each new morn with glee?
Was I too proud to pray to you
From down on bended knee?

As I reflect upon these things
I ask with some dismay
That you reconsider calling me
Until another day.

J. Elizabeth Ritter



Katherine of Bora: Martin Luther's Beloved Wife

by Maria Stam

Katherine of Bora's marriage to Martin Luther made her the best known woman of the Reformation. As a wife and mother her life was very different from that of the women previously profiled in this series. She was a source of help and encouragement for Luther during his most difficult time of transition.

Born on January 29, 1499, south of Leipzig, Germany, Katherine was placed in a convent at the age of 10 in Nimbschen, Saxony. At 16 she took the vows of a nun. By 1520 Luther's writings became known to the residents of the convent. Katherine and ten other women consulted Luther about their future. He not only advised them to escape, he even contacted the merchant, Leonhard Koppe, who from time to time delivered barrels of smoked herring to the convent and used to return home with an empty wagon. The man agreed to hide the nuns in his covered wagon and take them to Wittenberg on Easter night, 1523.

Katherine spent the following two years in the household of Luther's friend Lukas Cranach to learn housekeeping. Luther, believing that it was his responsibility to find suitable husbands for the former nuns, advised Katherine to marry the theologian Dr. Glatz. Yet, she informed Luther that she would prefer to marry another friend, Nikolaus von Amsdorff, or himself. Originally, Luther had no intention to marry, but when he learned that other clerics had taken wives, he changed his mind to show his approval of clerical marriage. At 42 he was 16 years older than Katherine. They married on June 13, 1525. Their marriage was a matter of convenience, love came later. Shortly after their wedding Luther admitted to a friend, "I cherish my wife, I would not change Katherine for France or Venice. God gave her to me and I was given to her."

Married life brought many changes for both. They lived in the old Augustine monastery, called Black Cloister, where Luther had been a monk. The building had forty rooms on the ground-floor with the monks' cells above. Katherine changed some of its structure by adding cellars for storage, a bathroom which could also be used as a laundry room, and a small brewery. The huge building housed, aside from the Luther family, relatives, friends, refugees, guests, and student boarders. Katherine was able to control the finances, a blessing for Luther who could not handle money. His salary as a professor was not sufficient for so many people. Fortunately, Katherine knew how to add extra income in spite of her busy life as the mother of six children, of whom two died at an early age. She grew vegetables, planted an orchard with fruit trees, made butter and cheese, and brewed her own beer. Her natural business sense did not stop there; she acquired a farm in another place, called Zulendorf.

Katherine was not only a practical housewife; she was an intelligent and lively conversationalist able to participate in discussions about theology. She did not always agree with Luther's ideas. In one case she persuaded her husband to reply to an attack against him by the Dutch humanist Erasmus (1466-1536). Luther wanted to keep quiet about the affair, but gave in to Katherine's prodding and composed a letter.

She possessed nursing qualities and was

able to treat her husband's diseases with herbs and special diets. Their son Paul, who later became a distinguished physician, called her "half a doctor". Luther often suffered from bouts of depression and Katherine helped him to overcome his mental gloom. When once he had left home in a sombre mood, she greeted him on his return, dressed in black and her face covered with a veil.

Luther was shocked, thinking someone had died, and asked her what happened. She answered, "Oh, dear doctor, a great accident has happened, our Lord has died; that's why I am filled with sorrow." Luther hugged her saying, "You're right, I acted as if there was no God in heaven." Thanks to his wife he gained new confidence in himself. Knowing about Katherine's many talents, Luther sometimes called her "my Lord" instead of "my Lady".

He often had to travel to other places to attend conferences and to debate. His letters to Katherine convey tenderness and care. In one of them, dated July 29, 1534, he wrote: "Grace and Peace in Christ, dear Lord Katie! Yesterday I had a good drink. I thought of what good wine and beer I have at home and a lovely wife, or should I say Lord?"

On July 28, 1545 when he felt sick and disappointed about the way things were going, he wrote: "To my wife Katherine of Bora, preacher, brewer, gardener, and whatever else she may be. My heart is cold. Give the Black Cloister back to the Elector. Sell everything else. Move to Zulendorf. My salary will help to fire it up, if the Elector will keep it for my last year." Katherine, concerned about the wellbeing of his mind and body, wrote him a worried letter, which he answered on February 10, 1546: "To the saintly, worrying Lady Katherine Luther, doctor of Zulendorf and Wittenberg, my gracious dear wife. We thank you heartily for being so worried that you can't sleep... If you don't stop worrying, I'm afraid the earth will swallow us. Pray and let God worry. Cast your burden on the Lord."

> Luther wrote, "To the saintly, worrying Lady Katherine Luther, doctor of Zulendorf and Wittenberg, my gracious dear wife."

Katherine's concern was not unfounded. Luther died only eight days later in Eisleben, his birthplace. What they both had feared happened. Katherine experienced a substantial reduction of income after Luther's death. She did not return the cloister, instead she would again take in student boarders. In his will Luther had taken care of Katherine's needs, but women at that period had no rights; they depended on the income of their husbands and after their death on the goodwill of other men.

Authorities tried to remove Katherine from the Black Cloister and take her sons from her. She was called proud, greedy, and unfit. However, she did not allow them to get away with such defamations and called on the Elector of Saxony for help. He arranged that she could stay in the cloister and keep her sons. King Christian of Denmark, whom she had met in the house of Cranach before her marriage, granted her a pension.

Katherine did not find much happiness after her husband's death. With the outbreak of a peasant war, she had to flee to Dessau and then to Magdeburg. When shereturned to the cloister some time later, the land was scorched, buildings burnt and livestock slaughtered. In 1552 on her way to Torgau with two of her children, the horses bolted over a rough road. As she jumped out to check what happened, she fell, landing on her back in cold water. She was taken to Torgau where her daughter,

Margaret, nursed her until her death on December 20, 1552.

Unfortunately, none of Katherine's letters have been preserved. A number of books have been written about her because of the important role she played in Luther's later life. She was known as a woman of great courage and determination, as well as a loving wife and mother. Despite her exceptional knowledge of issues pertaining to the Reformation, which sometimes even aroused the envy of Luther's friends, she remained in the background of public affairs. While the couple's personalities complimented each other, her female care and strength of character contributed much to Luther's ability to continue his work until the end. Some scholars believe that without her he probably would not have lived until the year 1546.

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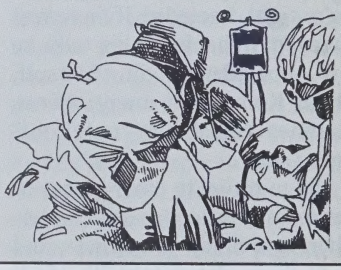
Roland H. Bainton, Women of the Reformation, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1971.
Frank Jehle, Grosse Frauen der Christenheit (Great Women of Christianity), Paulusverlag, Freiburg, Switzerland, 1998.

- Maria Stam is a freelance writer from London, ON. She is the author of several books, numerous articles and poems.

In Search of a Dream

by Dianne Coverley

One woman's search for appropriate medical care.



When I first thought of telling my story about epilepsy, I wondered if I could, since I had never had any experience in writing. Nevertheless my belief in God was so strong that if it was God's will for me to write then I would. Despite the ordeal I was going through at the time it appeared as though God's plan for me was to share my experiences with others through writing.

I put writing on hold at first because I was still trying to find the answer to having fewer seizures, and to be honest, I was secretly hoping to find a cure. Also, at this crucial point, I lost my caring and concerned doctor - my main support system for many years. Regardless, I decided to pursue my dream in search of seizure control believing that perhaps the future would hold a cure.

This is not just another medical miracle story. It is different, and through it I am trying to reach out to millions of people who are afraid to ask for help for fear of being termed crazy.

Epilepsy began to manifest itself in me at a time when this subject was not discussed openly. This made it difficult for me and others like me to understand. During my early years I thought my family understood my problem and accepted the fact that I had epilepsy. Now that I am older, I see it in a different light. I wonder if my parent's didn't feel a little guilty or ashamed of it. Some of those thoughts might have rubbed off on me as I was exceptionally quiet as a child. To a great extent, I was afraid to speak up and be heard. I felt that I was looked upon as being different or slow so rather than cause a scene, I became introverted. Basically I was brought up to be seen and not heard.

On the other hand, my sister was very

outgoing and quite the opposite. My parents gave her most of their attention. When my father introduced her to his friends he commonly referred to her as the "bright one" even though I was in the room at the same time. Ignorance of this sort did little to boost my already fragile emotional state. I know my parents meant well but sometimes their behaviour caused me so much stress that I felt like an overloaded fuse.

My case received mixed reactions from the medical profession. As a result I was given many different labels: at first idiopathic (no known cause) epilepsy, then intractable (chronic) and more recently, complex partial. All these terms were correct at one time or another. Most of the medical professionals I dealt with were very cooperative but some were hesitant to delve any further into my condition.

When I was younger I tried several medications at varying strengths but with no real success. As I got older this trend continued until I had exhausted all of my options except for surgery. Meanwhile, I was getting worse and even, at times wondering if I would be alive the next day.

Despite having a strong faith previously, now I became angry with God, and seriously depressed. In my anger, depression and overwhelming despair I finally turned away from God. To make matters worse I lacked faith in myself. So much for the idea of a loving God! Although the possibility of dying felt unfair, I thought God might have let me die in peace rather than to allow the suffering to drag on. Nevertheless my search continued.

Eventually my quest led me to investigate the possibility of surgery. I had read how much it helped many people with epilepsy and thought that it might be my answer.

First, I tried to see a few neurosurgeons in Toronto. When this failed, I tried going to the Montreal Neurological Institute (this was the main centre for epilepsy at that time). When this idea failed also, I wasted no time in getting an appointment to a centre in Hamilton. Unfortunately, shortly after, my doctor learned that this centre no longer specialized in work on epilepsy. Then I had a conversation with another doctor who mentioned a centre in London, Ontario that I should check out.

With strong determination I sought out London. Once my medical records were sent and I was approved for surgery, I had my initial work-up, then in the spring, subdural placements (electrodes placed inside the brain), and finally a successful Right Temporal Craniotomy. While this surgery had been necessary to regain my health it also proved to be an extreme test of faith.

On the eve of this operation, I was fearful at first, but all at once a warm feeling came over me: a sense of peace that God was with me. I recalled a similar experience years earlier when I had contemplated ending my life. (Hearing the screams of another weak soul made me realize that the end was not for me.) This had been followed by the same God-given feeling that the worst was over. Consequently I have opened my heart once again to the Lord and I have never questioned his love since.

My recovery from this surgery has been continuous, allowing me to look after my grandmother who has always been there for me, when my parents were not.

London is where my "dream" truly started and continues daily. I believe that London and the wonderful doctors that I met have offered me a chance at my dream of a seizure-free future. One cannot give up one's dreams - for what is life without hope! If there is a lesson to be learned here, I believe I was forced to fall back on an inner strength that I didn't know I had, and I came out on top. *I am a survivor!*

Dianne Coverley graduated from both public and high school in Toronto. She focused on English, composition, grammar and spelling. Her efforts are paying off as she has written several short stories, two of these were published. "In Search of a Dream" and "The Evolution of Epilepsy - My Story." The first story inspired an autobiography with the same name. Dianne is currently working on a second book.

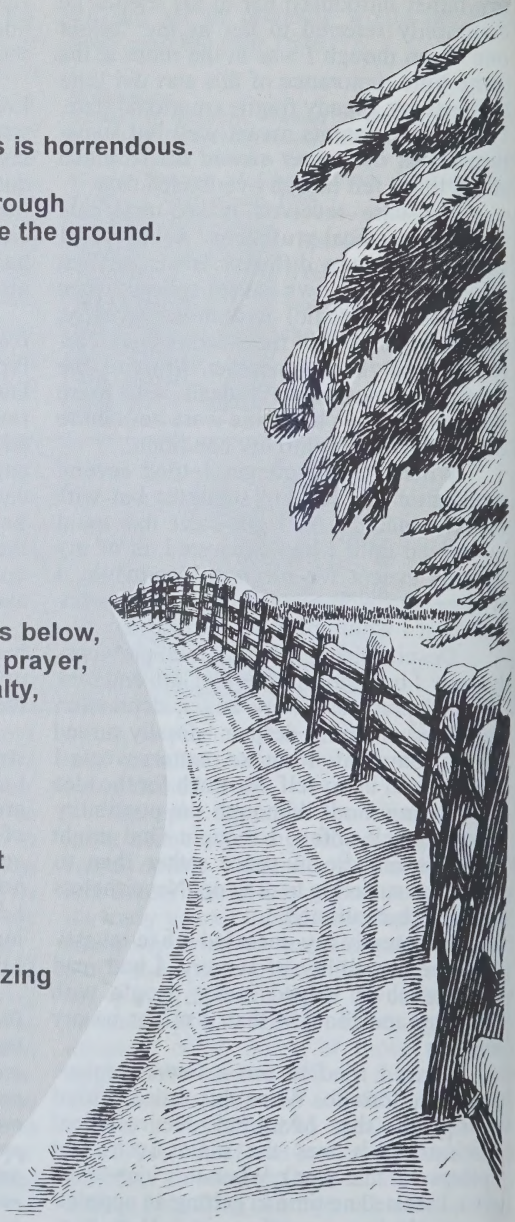
The Ice Battle Of 1998

Cruising down the highway
at peace, no other thought
except to vacation with family
on this bright May morning.
All at once the sight that greets us is horrendous.
A patch of trees mowed down
as though the farmer had gone through
with a scythe held a few feet above the ground.
Then another
and another.
We question, was it a windstorm?
musing why we had not
heard about this on the news.
Grey-brown slash.

Driving off the Trans-Canada
to country roads
the scene is similar, yet different.
Here trees stand
in various stages of anguish;
some have heads lowered
over bits of greenery on their skirts below,
some have bony hands uplifted in prayer,
some bow as though meeting royalty,
their boughs touching the ground,
and, heaven forbid,
some have been beheaded.
Their spines are straight, upright,
a few leaves here and there
and you cringe as they stand erect
without heads.

It is a few miles more
before we absorb it all, finally realizing
we are viewing
the aftermath of the infamous
ice storm of January 1998.
That extremely beautiful
yet perilous long black night.

Elizabeth M. Tayti



CELEBRATING: Children, Teens, Young Adults

YOUTH IN MISSION VISITS CUBA

From August 19 to 30, 2000, a team of Youth in Mission volunteers from The Presbyterian Church in Canada traveled to Cuba on a work-exposure tour. Our time time in Cuba was spent learning about the country, learning about the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba and participating in several small work projects.

Our hosts from the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba were incredible and showed us their vibrant Christian community. Our favorite evening was spent in play and recreation with the Presbyterian-Reformed congregation of Luyano.

Young and old, Canadians and Cubans all played musical chairs and many other games as we got to know each other, despite the language barrier. During our time in Cuba, we also enjoyed visiting many social programs. In Cardenas we visited an irrigation project, bio-gas program, and school renovation being done by Christian Centre for Reflection and Dialogue. In Havana we visited a park renovation, and two community gardens.

The work portion of our trip consisted of four different projects. First we sanded boards and did some cleaning for the church in Luyano. We also did some grass cutting with machetes in the town of Porta Esperansa. Our final two projects were less

- Lower left: The YIM Cuba team from left to right - Sarah Kaye, Colleen Smith, Guy Smagghe, Nancy Thompson, Dianne Oliphant.
- Below: Dianne Oliphant cleans up from the roofing work at the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Luyano.
- Top page 20: Sarah Kaye and Nancy Thompson sand boards for a new church roof at the Luyano church.

physical as we taught sunday School at a Pentecostal Centre, and left video recordings for an English teacher in Havana.

JNAC Youth Conference
August 2000
Shonan Village Centre, Hayama, Japan

Amanda Ross, a student at the University of Western Ontario, London, and a member of Erindale Presbyterian Church, Mississauga, is a youth leader in her congregation. She took part in a youth conference in Japan last August sponsored by the Japan-North America Council on Mission along with young people from the Korean Christian Church in Japan, the Kyodan (United Church of Christ in Japan), together with young people from Canada and the United States.

The youth of Japan are extremely talented. We witnessed that everywhere we went: the KCCJ youth conference, in the songs they sing, the songs they write, their art, their ideas, their energy.

And above all, this energy is used to serve others, Perhaps that is what is most wonderful: Japanese youth are willing to drop everything to serve. Whether it be four-month stints with Habitat for Humanity in the Philippines, or at a seniors residence in England, or even building homes for the homeless in their own back yard, it seems all Japanese youth, regardless of religion, are eager to serve.

less of religion, are eager to serve.

Somehow, the church in Japan must harness that energy before they risk losing it to the multitude of non-Christian service organizations that are out there, able to capture their vibrancy. So how are we losing them?

We have turned their faith into a one-day-a-week faith. Christian young people show up Sunday morning and promptly forget Christ as soon as they walk out the door of the church. The other six days of the week are wholly secular. We must challenge the youth to turn their faith into a seven-day-a-week faith. Challenge them to lead every minute of their lives as followers of Christ. Challenge them to learn more about why they are Christians and why they should care about their neighbours.

Send news of the activities of Children, Teens and Young Adults in your area.

Winter

I don't want to think
About it.
So cold.
Ice encrusted steps
and street.
Slippery walking
Uneasy feet.
Winter comes
It fills the world
with blowing, drifting snow.
I retire to the warmth
of my room
And I hear God
whisper
Talk with me for awhile.
We sit and talk
He and I
My day seems brighter
With God by my side
And winter's lost its chill.

Maureen Kowal

It All Began in Hungary...

Myanmar - Where Life is a Struggle

by Anna J. McCoskery

- Left: Anna J. McCoskery with Rev. Vahnei at Greyhound Bus Terminal in Toronto.

Have you ever longed nostalgically for the "good old days" when life seemed simpler? But- life without all the modern conveniences that we have come to expect?

Even without these conveniences, Canadians have always enjoyed freedom: of thought, speech, association, worship and choice. Unlike the villagers of north-west Myanmar (Burma) who still lack basic amenities and struggle constantly against starvation and disease. For 40 years they have also lived with fear and the oppression of a corrupt dictatorial military regime.

Buddhist government officials have been known to confiscate citizens' possessions, force villagers to act as porters, and to demand money whenever they can scare a bribe. This is the situation in the village of Lialenpi, population 1000, where my friend Rev. Vahnei (Mathipi) gives hope and assistance to villagers in coping with and improving their lives.

I met Mathipi Vahnei in August, 1997, at the World Alliance of Reformed Churches 23rd General Council, in Debrecen, Hungary, where we were delegates. We have corresponded since then. In May, 2000, he completed his eight-month studies at the Overseas Mission Studies Center in New Haven, Connecticut, aided by a stipend from the World Council of Churches.

At my invitation, he came to Ontario to speak about his country at the May 30, Sarnia Presbyterial Spring Rally in Watford. During the three weeks that he was a guest in my home in Strathroy, we talked very frankly about the disparities of goods and services in our two countries.

Turning on the tap for a drink of pure water or pouring a glassful from a pitcher in the refrigerator, was a pleasant contrast to Mathipi's life in Myanmar. Women and children there have a two-hour walk up and down mountain paths in the night, to a stream shared with the domestic animals to fill their containers with water before it is all gone.

Mathipi enjoyed listening to CNN's "Larry King Live" or his favourite program "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?" - pleasant and painless ways to improve his English. At home these will be replaced with reading by kerosene lamp or candle and listening to the BBC News over battery radio.

It was so easy here to plug in the toaster and coffee maker, and to cook food using the microwave, electric burner or barbecue instead of looking for firewood to heat a flat stone on the floor inside the house! In Myanmar all food - rice, vegetables or meat - is cooked in water over an indoor fire. Mathipi says that a thatched roof lasts longer when it has been smoked from the

cooking fires.

After years of a minimal supply of rice as the main staple, Rev. Vahnei attributes his increased energy to the varied and nutritious diet enjoyed during his stay in America.

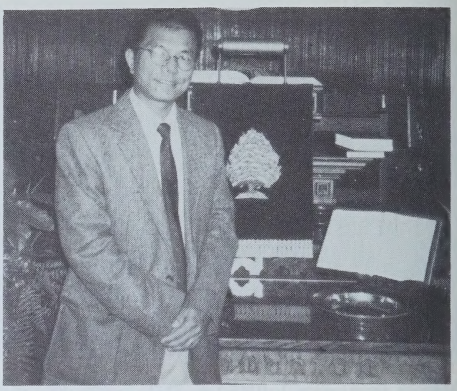
In the southwestern mountainous area of Myanmar, Rev. Vahnei helps to supervise the 97 Mara Evangelical Churches. As Secretary of the General Assembly of the Mara Evangelical Church, he must travel regularly to the church head office at Sittway, a journey of five days over mountain trails. The Church in Myanmar needs young men as the older pastors cannot endure the travel.

He sleeps on the trail in the open or in a village on the path bundled in blankets when the night air cools, and he carries his food - cooked rice - wrapped in banana leaves.

The West Adelaide Helen Scott Society WMS made it possible for Rev. Vahnei to purchase sleeping bags for himself and his 11-year-old daughter. (His wife died June 25, 1999, from the complications of malaria. During his absence his daughter has been living with his sister and his brother's family on the family farm in a village, a two-day walk from Lailenpi.)

As he walks through the area he picks up mail to be posted at Sittway as there are no roads linking the villages and no postal service. Our correspondence over the years has been safe as the military have not yet interfered with mail to and from the church office.

As Rev. Vahnei sets out on his next walk to Sittway, I wonder if he'll remember our drives in my car, the bus rides to and from New York, and the crush of traffic on the Queen Elizabeth Way as we made our way to the Greyhound Terminal on Bay Street in Toronto. Hopefully, the beauty and peace of the Burmese night sky and the familiar positions of the stars will help to



- Rev. Vahnei at West Adelaide Presbyterian Church.

diminish the harshness of the Western World and help him to be content in his homeland again helping his people.

During his stay in our area, Rev. Vahnei spoke to different groups about farming practices in the rural hill villages bordering Bangladesh and India. The people make their livelihood from shifting cultivation - jhooming (slash the forest, burn and plant the crops).

Water is as important there as it is for Canadian farmers. The unpredictability of the annual May monsoon rains make it difficult to grow the staple food - rice. In summer, the villages have almost no water - for drinking, cooking, toilet facilities, gardens or for domestic animals.

The West Adelaide Presbyterian Church congregation and the Sarnia Presbyterial WMS raised money, matched by Presbyterian World Service and Development, to set up a water system for Pasei village, which was established in 1917, near the border of India. The population of 614 consists of 127 households. There is a primary school, a church, but no health care centre.

The village has shifted from one plot to another since its beginning due to the shortage of water. It is not unusual for a

- Myanmar women pound rice for their daily bread.

farmer to walk seven miles to his plot of land before he can start the slashing cycle again closer to the village.

The water proposal estimates are for plastic water pipe and cement, which must be carried to the site on the villagers' backs. A working committee in the village and the staff of Service and Development of the Mara Evangelical Church will work with them to supervise as they dig for the pipeline and construct the water storage unit. Upon the completion of the project, the village committee will be responsible for the maintenance of the project.

The water project will bring many positive outcomes to the village: lessen disease, provide for increased family income and community development works such as fish-farming and raising more domestic animals, which will revitalize the lives of the villagers.

Attending church worship is an important social aspect of the Myanmar culture. Here they give and receive support from each other, and their Christian pastor provides a spiritual message of hope. At Rev. Vanhei's church about 700 worshippers attend the ten o'clock Sunday morning service. His sermons must be approved, in advance, by the local leader of the military government.

On Sunday afternoons, five classes of Sunday School instruction are given by the church elders. Every day there is a church service beginning well before dark, as there is no electricity in the village. Women's fellowship takes place on Thursday evenings, and the young people meet on Friday evenings. On Saturdays, the worship is for outreach mission work. Sixty people are sponsored by the local congregation and sent out to evangelize non-Christians in the neighbouring villages. The Saturday prayers and offerings are to support these sixty missionaries and the newly-converted Christians.

Offerings, given at every worship, may consist of a few handfuls of rice, maize, some firewood, eggs, fruits and vegetables, dried meat or fish, chicken, piglets, but rarely money.

The offerings are brought to the collection room, usually a bamboo hut ("tent") beside the church where the elders wait. They fill palm baskets with the rice and the items are sold after the church service at a much cheaper price than would be received at the local weekly market.

At harvest time, the church elders go to the fields and record the tithes of grain and the sales transactions. If someone cannot pay at the time, the elders will take a note and accept payment when it can be made.

Money is very scarce; there would be about the equivalent of twelve dollars Canadian a month with which to support a family. In order to pay for a child's school fees, uniform, books and the expected bribe to the teacher, the father will drive cows or pigs to India, a three-to-four day walk in order to sell them for cash. Then there may also be an offering of money brought to the elders.

As a respected pastor, Rev. Vahnei is in a position to give leadership to the people, not only by religious example, but in health

matters such as boiling water, encouraging a varied diet of beans, corn and vegetables for protein in the diet, rather than feeding these foods to the animals and cooking rice for the family meal. When the customs officers inspect his huge suitcase, they will be surprised to see an antique Ontario corn planter, bellows-style; a seeder consisting of a cloth bag and a rotary crank for broadcasting small seed; and plastic bags of corn and beans and recipes for cooking them. I hope that the military immigration officials will not confiscate these tools or try to extract too much bribe money to let them pass into the country.

The universities are now closed in his country so the next generation of Buddhist military are being trained in the schools of Asian cities. An outreach group of a United Church in Sarnia is planning to pay for a Myanmar student to slip across the border to India to learn engineering and return to help the mountain villagers establish water supplies. The Sarnia Presbyterial hopes to educate a young woman to become a health worker in one of the empty health care centres in a mountain village. She would train at a college in Myanmar.

Hearing Rev. Vahnei's personal experiences as he told how the people cope with dreadful situations in his country has whetted my desire to tell others. Knowledge, understanding, compassion and assistance may in some small way improve their quality of life. Some day we hope there will be a little more food and an adequate supply of water for the people of Myanmar. Entwined throughout their faith is always the future hope of freedom.

This is mission with meaning. I hope that we can make even a tiny difference! And to think, *it all began in Hungary!*

- Anna McCoskery is a member of West Adelaide Presbyterian Church, Strathroy, Ontario, and President of the Sarnia Presbyterial.

Step by Step

He does not lead me year by year,
Nor even day by day;
But step by step my path unfolds,
My Lord directs my way.

Tomorrow's plans I do not know;
I only know this minute.
But he will say, "This is the way,
By faith now walk ye in it."

And I am glad that it is so,
Today's enough to bear,
And when tomorrow comes, his grace
Shall far exceed its care.

What need to worry then, or fret,
The God who gave his Son
Holds all my moments in his hand
And gives them one by one.

- Author unknor

Millennium Quilt Exhibit

2001

Jan 14	Community Hall Chauvin, AB
Jan 16-24	Knox Presbyterian Church Lloyminster, Alberta
Jan 26-Feb 7	Knox Presbyterian Church Red Deer, Alberta
February 8-28	St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church Calgary, AB
March 9-26	Ormstown Presbyterian Church Ormstown, Quebec
April 1-April 18	St. John's Presbyterian Church Kingston, Ontario
April 24-May 8	St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church Barrie, ON
May 15-31	Gale Presbyterian Church Elmira, ON

PRESBYTERIAN

WESTERN WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

"NEW BEGINNINGS IN CHRIST"

Rev. 21:5

SPEAKER: *Rev. BRENDA FRASER*

JUNE 22-24, 2001

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SASKATOON, SK

REGISTRATION FORMS WILL GO OUT TO ALL CHURCHES, PRESBYTERIALS, SYNODICALS IN FOUR WESTERN PROVINCES.

Area Educational Consultant

The Synod/Synodical of Southwestern Ontario

Applications will be received until March 1st, 2001, by

Rev. Mark B. Gaskin
97 Wellington St
Brantford, ON N3T 2M1
cpc@bfree,on.ca

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Two part-time positions (two-thirds time each) under the auspices of the Regional Staffing Committee of the Synodical/Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario, one position in the Province and the other in Eastern Ontario.

Each person will give leadership in developing programs and strategies for congregations, presbyteries and WMS groups, in the areas of mission, education and outreach.

Preference will be given to applicants having a certificate or degree in education and theology.

The position description and other relevant information are available from:

Rev. Scott Emery
c/o St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
Chemin du lac Ferre,
Val Cartier QC G0A 4S0
(418) 847-3333
scott.emery@sympatico.ca

OR

Druse Bryan
68 - 13th Street
Roxboro, QC H8Y 1L7
(514) 684-2683
wordshop@sympatico.ca

Application deadline: February 28, 2001.

KNITTED ITEMS APPRECIATED!

Dear friends,

It is with much joy that I write back to you informing you that 6 parcels have arrived with pneumonia prevention vests and blankets inside. The parcels were opened and contents were distributed immediately to children's ward and maternity. I can assure that the gifts arrived at the time of need - the weather is cold and all the contents have been put to good use.

How we wish you every God's blessing as you continue to serve in this manner.

May the Lord bless you.

With much appreciation.

Mrs. Enj Kawerama, Matron
CCAP Hospital, Ekwendi, Malawi

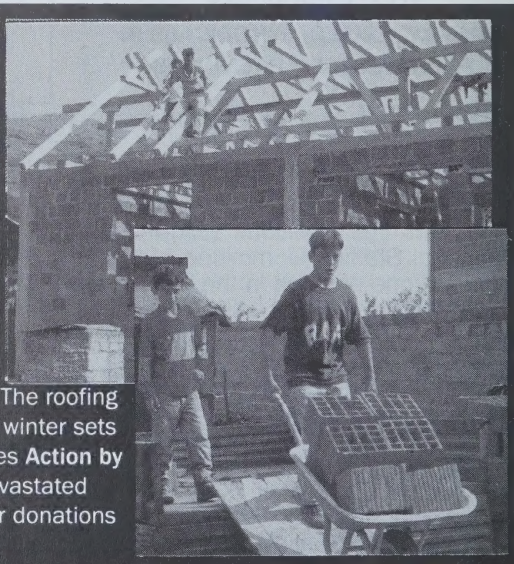
Dear Friends in Christ,

Warm greetings from Livingstonia, Malawi, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is to acknowledge the receipt of the parcel which we received in August 2000. On behalf of the Hospital Executive Committee, I would like to thank you for the wonderful donation you sent to this Hospital. All things you sent us are very useful to our new born babies here.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs. Dorah Chavura, Matron
David Gordon Memorial Hospital



Flamur Tolaj, his grandmother, mother, two younger brothers and sister live in a temporary shelter erected in the courtyard of their ruined 200 year old stone house. But this winter, they will have a new home. A master builder is doing much of the work, but that doesn't stop 15 year old Flamur and his 10 year old brother Flurim from carrying bricks up to the second floor level of their new home each morning before school. The roofing will be done before another Balkan winter sets in. This is one of the 600 new homes **Action by Churches Together** is building in devastated Kosovo. This is one of the ways your donations to PWS&D are making a difference.

Presbyterian World Service & Development

50 Wynford Dr. Toronto ON M3C 1J7
tel: 416-441-1111 1-800-619-7301
email: pwsd@presbyterian.ca web: www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

Forward in Faith

We have referred in the past to many former WMS members who served the Society faithfully during their lifetime and who still assist in the work of the Society through legacies they have left to us.

As of the end of September, the WMS had received over $300,000 this year in undesignated legacies.

At its meeting in October, Council Executive approved recommendations from the finance Working Group regarding the designation of some of these legacy funds. It agreed that $50,000 be added to the Isabella Brown Memorial Fund, which provides grants for leadership development training events that equip participants for some aspect of Christian service. $20,000 was transferred to the Margaret Renton Memorial Fund, which assists underprivileged children to attend camp. $50,000 was added to the Louise Reith Memorial Fund, the "income to be used for Leadership Development for Synodicals and Presbyterials". This action will increase the annual amount available to Synodicals from $500 to $1,000 and to Presbyterials from $300 to $600. It also will mean that more than one Synodical and Presbyterial may benefit each year.

In recognition of the 2000-2001 Flames Initiative focus on children, youth and young adults, it was decided to provide financial assistance for training events and conferences for young people. Council Executive therefore agreed to set aside $50,000 from undesignated legacies to establish a Youth Conference Fund, the guidelines for which are to be developed.

The WMS trusts that the foregoing decisions will benefit more of our members and young people as they receive training for service within our church.

Giollo Kelly, Treasurer

"Do you think God loves all people?"

Small wonder a resident of a boarding home might ask about love. So many have been stung by rejection over the years.

Who gets loved? Who gets abandoned?

Boarding Homes Ministry breaks down the barriers of isolation and builds Christian community. We link church volunteers with residents. We worship together in the boarding home and celebrate life in Christ.

In boarding homes all across the country gifted, faithful people are waiting to be met. They have so much to offer us.

Your congregation can become part of our expanding ministry. Five volunteers from a church are all that's needed to link with a home. We will help train and nurture your volunteers. Our teams of home visitors report that their lives are changed. They see with a new perspective. And the residents delight in the companionship of their new friends. God is honoured.

For training materials and further information, please contact us. This ministry of love and healing is urgent.

Boarding Homes Ministry
The Rev. Rodger Hunter, Chaplain
Station Q, Box 713
Toronto, M4T 2N5
416-992-4987, bhmin@sympatico.ca

BOOKS

Order from:
The Book Room
50 Wynford Drive
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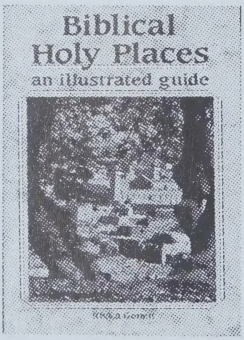
416-441-1111 Ext. 239/240
E-mail: Bookroom@presbyterian.ca
Hours: Mon-Fri-9:00-4:45

1-800-619-7301
Please do not send payment with your order. (An invoice including postage and applicable tax will be sent with your order.) Please include name and location of congregation. **Note: VISA and Mastercard now accepted.**

Still moving... the new glossy WMS Annual Report is available free to anyone who would like to promote the work of the Society. Please order from The Book Room.

Biblical Holy Places An Illustrated Guide by Rivka Gonen

People draw inspiration from famous sites remembered for their association with important biblical events and personalities. Illustrated with over 250 colour photographs, many useful maps to help orientate the reader, and 210 entries that clarify the nature, traditions and history that surround them. Wanderlust is heightened by a sense of the spirit of the place and the atmosphere of the events that occurred. **Paulist Press G7412 $31.75**

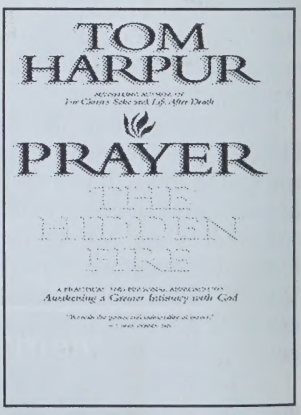


Discerning Your Spiritual Gifts by Lloyd Edwards

Spiritual gifts are discussed from a biblical perspective and we are guided to discover our own particular spiritual gifts through step-by-step exercises and self-evaluation. It is also a complete resource for leading workshops on encouraging people to discover the talents and skills they have been given to carry out ministry in the congregation, home and workplace.
Cowley Publications G6701 $17.95

Prayer, the Hidden Fire by Tom Harper

Newly available in soft cover, Prayer examines our inner need to pray. We are encouraged to develop our own personal style of praying beyond the ways we have prayed as children, using language we might use with a best friend. There is practical help with prayers given for personal adaptation, also inner prayers and meditation, prayers with "suction"; all enhanced with Harper's shared experiences from his own spiritual journey.

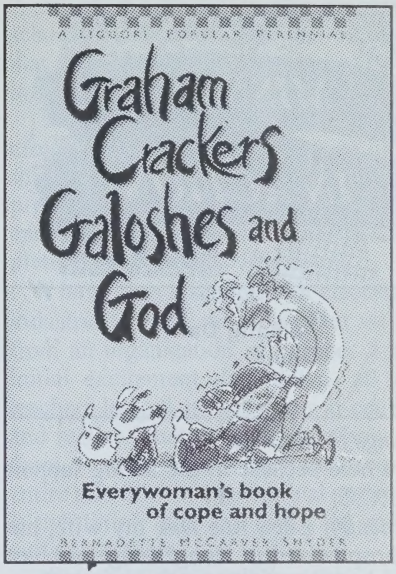


Northstone Publishers G4678 $26.50

Precious Days & Practical Love, Caring for Your Aging Parent by James Taylor, Northstone Publishing
When one of our parents needs our care, our lives and our relationship with the ones who cared for us becomes completely turned around. In a very down-to-earth style, the author prepares us and works through the realities of the financial and legal aspects (in a Canadian context) of the different stages of this emotional time. By being better informed we can make better decisions and choices which can make the final months or years of our parents among the best experiences we have to remember.
G4841 $21.25

Graham Cracker Galoshes and God, Every Women's Book of Cope and Hope by Bernadette McCarver Snyder
Essays of humour and misadventure that both working women and stay at home moms will cherish. These are followed by a reflection or thoughtful conversation with God. We will all relate to words of comfort or prayers and inspiration when life seems most unfair and when the author asks, "Where's my gold star, Lord?" **Liquori Publications. G7408 $14.95**

Personal Pilgrimage, One Day Soul Journeys for Busy People by Viki Hurst
This is a wonderful way to take an ancient practice and adapt it to today's busy lives. There are 12 templates suggesting themes, times and destinations such as a place where water flows, a tree site or a glorious nature dwelling, short local versions of the traditional pilgrimage. Journal techniques are used to trigger insight and creativity. This practical format helps us to focus and to take time for personal reflection to stay in touch with what is important.
Available Soon! $26.00


A LIGUORI POPULAR PERENNIAL
Graham Crackers Galoshes and God
Everywoman's book of cope and hope
BERNADETTE McCARVER SNYDER

MISSION STUDY MATERIALS FROM FRIENDSHIP PRESS:

Map of Africa by Friendship Press, NY, based on the World Map: Peters Projection with text by Susan Converse Winslow - information on the back that can be photocopied contains statistics and facts about the AIDS crisis, the State of the World's Children in Africa and refugees as well as geography and history.

Witness to Genocide: The Children of Rwanda. Edited by Richard A. Salem. Drawings by Child Survivors of the Rwandan Genocide of 1994. Foreword by Hillary Rodham Clinton.
A truly inpsirational book which not only presents the tragic tale of death and mutilation through the artwork of these young witnesses, but also tells of the hopes, dreams and wisdom of these children as they look to their future. A disturbing book, but also a sign of hope.

Prices available on request.

MISSION IN ACTION

Peikang Dai
China

Greetings from China.
We are here because of the loving support from P.C.C.

Recently, Ellen Rae Dai, my wife, has been hospitalized in Hong Kong for chest pain, coughing and breathlessness. Wilma Welsh called from Canada. Ellen felt comforted and loved in her sickbed.

By the time Ellen was transferred to Calgary for further tests and treatment, I got a message from Kathleen Tomie, WMS in Calgary. It was an unrelated message for Ellen's sickness but we feel loved again as to why at this time someone would send us a message from somewhere in Calgary.

Life is full of twists and turns but it is assuring to know the loved ones in Canada are bound with us despite geographical distance. That is called "Mission in Action".

With love and gratitude,
Peikang Dai

Adele Halliday
(formerly in Kenya)

In one of Adele Halliday's last letters from Kenya she reflects on donations of money and gifts, and the thought behind them.

The special school where I work is financially supported by an organization in Germany. This organization regularly donates money and gifts to help the school advance more and expand beyond its current capacity. Of course, everyone would love for the school to be financially stable and self-sufficient such that it is no longer reliant on organizations from overseas, but that is not the case. And without the gifts from abroad, the school would likely fold due to lack of finances. It is this organization which is helping to build the classroom directly beside my house.

One day the organization in Germany sent us two suitcases full of teaching aids and supplies. I have never before been on the receiving end of a gift like that. Previously, I had been the one to give away supplies on short-term mission trips. We opened those suitcases over lunch, and it was like Christmas morning for me!

I was so excited, and could see immediate applications for the gifts at the school. Even pencils were a joy, especially colourful ones that the children love to use. Our school only owned a few pencil crayons and markers (a luxury because they are so expensive) and the few we had were old, and shared between classes. To receive new ones was a true blessing.

Some of the things that we take for granted have never been seen by the teachers here, and are simply not available in Kenya, and the teachers gazed at these new items in confusion. Other things in the suitcase I looked at and could tell that some child had previously used them and my heart ached. I felt like someone abroad had taken pity on some poor, rural, mentally challenged children and sent various things that they no longer wanted. I felt like they just wanted to get rid of a few extra belongings and to feel good while doing it.

I believe that too many parts of Africa and other partners in the south have become the dumping ground for the rest of the world. I can look around Kenya and see evidence of it on a regular basis. Just last

The most valuable teaching aid that I have are bottlecaps.

week, I was visiting a friend who works at a school for the deaf, and as we walked, he showed me his school library. It is locked and never used.

He told me that a few years ago, another volunteer decided the school needed a library, and worked hard to set one up. He wrote letters abroad making an appeal for more funds so that they could fill the library, and the volunteer received books. Unfortunately, the books that were received were not particularly relevant to the school population. So, the children who are deaf, and who only speak English, Kiswahili, and their mother tongue, have books in French, German, Latin and archaic English. They have old outdated textbooks, nursery school picture books, and audiotapes (which they cannot hear). The majority of the library is filled with things they cannot use, a minimal selection of novels, and nothing which is at all recent. How frustrating.

Some of my friends at home have sent packages over the past few months which are always exciting to receive and fun to share. I tend to incorporate some of the items into my lessons. Coloured star stickers have a two-fold purpose for lessons on colour and on shapes, and then each child runs off wearing a star on their cheek. Bubbles are blown into the air, and children dance with delight. Other goodies are shared, and people are very happy. So, to receive the gifts was a joy, knowing that they were intended for us. Simple gifts, shared in love, and which went a long, long way.

But, because many church projects are not self-sufficient, I have seen so many people jump through hoops in order to secure funds. I have seen projects minimize their own priorities while emphasizing those of the donor to the point where schools and projects own and build things that they cannot use while the most pressing needs are seemingly ignored.

Without proper, thorough, and frequent discussions with the recipient on an equal sharing basis, the donor runs the risk of presenting the receiving organization and/or project with something that is completely and culturally irrelevant.

I have seen a school with electrical and industrial sewing machines that were sent from an organization in Europe. After the initial excitement died down, all of the teachers looked at each other in confusion, and realized that no one knew how to use them. Further, there is only one room in the entire school with an electrical outlet, and it is the dining hall, and awkward and difficult to use there.

Somehow those teachers found out that I had used sewing machines back in Canada, and they asked me to be their instructor to show them how to use those machines. Armed with the vague knowledge that I gleaned from my home economics class in grade 7, I am the most qualified person in the general region.

The most valuable teaching aid that I have are bottlecaps. Those caps that people usually discard after opening a bottle of soda are used in art class, in math class as counters, and in various other ways. They are in every classroom, and highly desired by any special education teacher in Kenya. One day, with the help of friends, I was able to collect a bag full of bottlecaps and brought them to school; the joy on the faces of the teachers was indescribable.

Some of the best gifts that I have received have no monetary value. The gift of time is something that I have come to treasure. I only wish that more people

Some of the best gifts have no monetary value.

could give time to simply be present with people, without rushing about or thinking of something else. Time to take tea, time to sit, time to be. That is one of the things that I am going to miss most about Kenya - people taking time to simply be together.

Adele

John & Viola Duff
661 St. Thomas Line
Box 6, Site 21, RR 1
Paradise, NF, A1L 1C1
Telephone: (709) 895-6179
e-mail: <john.duff@roadrunner.nf.net>

Viola got news today that the project proposal for distance nursing education linking the Centre for Nursing Studies here in St. John's, Newfoundland, the Distance Medical Education unit at Memorial University, and UPOLI, submitted through the Canadian Community Colleges Association for CIDA funding, has received approval. That will involve trips to Nicaragua for Viola annually or perhaps more often, funded by the project.

Nursing Station Opens

Managua. 19 September, 2000.

Under a blazing Nicaraguan sun, over a hundred people gathered at the new nursing station in the poor Managua neighbourhood of Villa Libertad to see the new nursing station, financed to a large extent by Canadian Presbyterians through their gifts to Presbyterian World Service and Development. Repeated mention of the PCC punctuated the remarks of all speakers, including Sergio Denis (rector of the Polytechnic University), Lydia Ruth Zamora (one of the main movers behind the project, and vice rector), and Carmen Benvenides (director of the School of Nursing). The nurse at the local government health post was introduced, as was Rosalina Sandoval, of the UPOLI staff, who will be director of the project.

What sets the present station apart is that it is a joint project of the School of Nursing and of the community. The community and the nurses will join in its direction and physicians, if involved at all, will be consultants.

This approach to the primary role of community and nurses runs counter to the traditional Latin American model which puts doctors in the forefront. Interestingly, in Nicaragua, doctors outnumber nurses by about three to one.

Discussing the interaction of community and the University, Lydia Ruth Zamora shared an important insight, "We thought that we had involved the community from the beginning and that they wanted us there because of what we could bring. Later we conducted a series of interviews and heard the community say something rather different: We decided to let you into our homes, our sanctuaries, because over the months you had won our trust."

OVERSEAS STAFF BIRTHDAYS

FEBRUARY
5 - Philip Barsoum, Canada
12 - Christopher Barsoum, Canada

MARCH
12 - Ling Schwarz, Nepal
15 - Brenda Patterson, El Salvador
19 - Naomi Inglis, Malawi
27 - Margaret Vanderzweerde, India

APRIL
1 - Joel Lessard-Clouston, Japan
9 - Cathy McMullen (back in Canada)
11 - Sean David Allison, Cameroon
15 - Sherien Barsoum, Canada
22 - Linda Inglis, Malawi

Another important concept is that the centre offers an academic element as well, since the staff will be composed of nursing students. This hands-on, practical element is crucial to the approach to nursing education at the centre.

This is the first such centre in Central America. Two others exist in Latin America, one in Ecuador and the other in Colombia. Nursing faculties in Britain and the US have visited the UPOLI to learn from the special approach to nursing education. The Presbyterian Church in Canada is exploring ways to involve Canadian medical students not only here but in other health care facilities in Nicaragua. The church already facilitates such involvement in India and parts of Africa.

Future plans for the centre include the integration of a reliable source of potable water and the addition of a second storey to the structure. The program has existed for several years but has been hampered by the lack of an adequate facility with gynecologic examinations sometimes taking place under the trees in someone's back yard for lack of such facilities.

Also attending was Lic. Julia Morales, one of the pioneer nursing educators in Nicaragua and a person who trained many of the present UPOLI staff.

FLAMES Mission Tours

Hoping for a peaceful solution for the Holy Land, we are rescheduling our Holy Land Tour for after Easter. Unlike many commercial tours, our **Holy Land Tour** includes the West Bank and Gaza; thus, it became unadvisable to depart last October when it appeared the tensions were escalating to a dangerous degree. (As with all our tours, if we feel it necessary to cancel, we return all monies we have received.) We have tentatively booked airlines, hotels and guides for April 18 - May 2, 2001. The cost for this tour will be $3500. There are some spaces available, but you should indicate your interest early by sending a deposit for $500 made out to "Conference World Tours" and send it to Sarah Hoag, PCC, 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto M3C 1J7. Balance is due March 2, 2001. Registration forms and brochures with more detailed information and an outline of the itinerary are also available from Sarah.

In addition, there is only one place (at press deadline time) available on the rescheduled Flames Mission Tour to **Mozambique and Malawi.** The dates for this tour are April 24 - May 14, 2001. The cost of this tour is $3800. Deadline for full payment is March 9, 2001. Mark Gordon will lead the Mozambique portion and the focus in Malawi will be in the north (Livingstonia) where Heather Jones will be your guide. In between, Linda Inglis will introduce you to some of the Blantyre area during the few days you are there.

Nicaragua and Costa Rica (March 12 - 22) is definitely a "go" - and, all these peripatetic Presbyterians are enthusiastically signing on for the extra ecological tour to March 25th ($390 extra).) If you are interested in Central America and seeing SOYNICA programs first-hand and what Denise Van Wissen and David Villalonga have been accomplishing, this is the tour for you. (Also included are some touristy things, as you will visit some pre-Columbian petroglyphs, cathedrals and colourful markets.) You should indicate your interest NOW! Or we may reach our maximum before we receive your $500 deposit. Cost of the basic tour is $2200. Deadline for full payment is February 2, 2001.

Nicaragua 6/09/00
Villa Chaguitillo

Luis Perez was one of four young people from our partner churches who were invited by International Ministries to take part in the Canada 2000 Youth conference in July. His letter is printed below. The other overseas guests were from Cuba, Hungary and Romania. A young Malawian was invited but was unable to get a visa.

LIVING STONES: A Chosen Generation

To speak about the importance for each of us to attain our goals, even ones which seem beyond our reach, and to speak of walking towards a new horizon would not mean anything were God not in our hearts. He is the engine in our lives which pushes us to give our best in each moment of our lives and to share with our brothers and sisters His truth, love, strength and wisdom.

In that way we can shine so that His light can reach even those who think they have no need of it. We ask that we might become as transparent as the air so that the light of others might also reach our darkness.

This trip to Canada was very important in the development of my faith and of my maturing process. To be able to meet people of different ages, backgrounds, and countries helped open my thinking to a world in constant movement. A series of happy experiences: from the moment I arrived at Toronto airport, the visit to Montreal, the meetings with international delegates, the visit to Niagara Falls, the time in Coldwater, the event itself at the university, the worship services, and meeting young people from across Canada. These are all experiences which mark a new stage in my life and especially in my relationship with Jesus Christ.

I had always dreamed of such a trip and I had often asked the Lord for a chance to learn more about a world which needs us all so much, where there is such suffering, so much injustice. I believe the events which I attended were a great step to bring young people together in community service. There is so much to be done! But step by step we can build the world for which we all long if we follow God's path and learn to love others as ourselves and thus gain our reward in heaven.

I want to express my deepest thanks to the Presbyterian Church for having organized this great event at which all of us were able to learn more about sharing the love of Jesus Christ and for having invited me and given me the chance to realize one of my dreams.

Joe Reed has been a friend for years and he helped me get my passport and visa, waited for me at the airport, and helped arrange the trip to Montreal by car and the visit to St. Jean Baptiste Day. I also want to thank Barbara Nawratil and Wilma Welsh for their help and for all they did for me and the other international visitors. Thank you friends! Thanks too to all the warm and friendly families in Coldwater who received me into their homes and made me feel like a member of their family.

Coldwater is a town filled with human warmth and I remember many happy experiences there. I hope to return one day. To all those who helped organize my stay there as well as to the group leaders who organized activities, maintained order and made us their friends...thanks!

And finally, to my friends from the Youth in Mission Group from 1999 who were with me after a whole year of being apart and whom I always remember with great fondness. (I'd fill a book if I set out all the people who should be mentioned.) Thank you for all your work.

So I am signing off not by saying goodbye but "until the next time": I remember

God is the engine in our lives which pushes us to give our best in each God moment of our lives.

each moment I was in your beautiful country. I hope to meet you again, and may God bless you all. May He always guide you and keep you.

Muy Cordialmente,
Luis Antonio Pérez Soza.

Brenda & Jim Patterson
El Salvador, Central America

Mission Among the Forgetful/Forgotten
El *Salvador*
October 12th, Metapán

It is, coincidentally, Columbus Day. A small group of Church people gather in Metapán, in a borrowed class room. Juan Carlos is a radio announcer. Andrecito is a semi-retired shop keeper. Juan Lemus is a local business man. Ramon Ramírez is a rather unconventional pastor. And Jenifer is a 19-year-old aesthetician. They have one thing in common: curiosity.

They want to know for sure about their history and the history of their people. They have heard some things. They have imagined some things. But tonight there is a promise that they will learn something concrete about what has brought El Salvador to its present condition.

The event is a movie night. The video was not easy to track down, but thanks to a kindly Baptist lady in San Salvador who knows the right people, at last we have in our hands a copy of "Romero". Not many years ago this movie was strictly forbidden.

For an hour and forty-five minutes they watch the screen intently. At times, they flinch visibly. The movie is violent, and accurate. When I turn on the lights, there

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Central America

1. for Viola Duff as she continues to use her nursing skills in medical mission to benefit the people of Nicaragua.
2. for the newly established links between nursing education in Canada, and in Nicaragua.
3. for young people like Louis Perez, Chaguitillo, Nicaragua, whose faith and ministry have been energized by Canada Youth 2000.
4. for wisdom and discernment as Jim and Brenda Patterson help people of El Salvador come to grips with the wounds of past conflict. Pray for people's ability to remember without fear. And pray that God will bless the coming generations with a new dignity and awareness of the beautiful people of El Salvador whom God has created.
5. for the children and youth in areas like Managua and Guatemala who strive to better themselves under extremely adverse conditions.

Cuba

1. for Rev. Carlos E. Ham, general secretary of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba, and his young family, as he takes up duties with the World Council of Churches in Geneva.

China

1. for good health for Ellen Rae and Peikang Dai as they serve in China.

Middle East

1. for peace and reconciliation among Muslims, Christians and Jews in the land that is holy to all their faiths.

- Church at Santa Ana.

are tears and there is silence.

Juan Carlos says, "I knew it. They lied to us. They were murdering us and torturing us, and they lied to us at the same time."

Andrecito says, "I tried to leave El Salvador in those days. I had even bought a ticket...but I could not get a visa. I was afraid for my family. Those were terrible years. And we could not even talk about it."

Ramon says, "Young Miguel Portillo was in my youth group. He went away to seminary. A couple of years after he graduated, the Army disappeared him. So many good people died."

Juan Lemus and Jenifer say nothing.

In a rural village north of San Salvador, we talked with the leaders of a resettled community. During the war their parents were freedom fighters, many of them paying the supreme sacrifice for their high ideals. The small cemetery lists the names of women and men who fell trying to bring a measure of redemption to the ordinary people of El Salvador. According to the governing authorities, the freedom fighters were all communists, trying to take over an otherwise peaceful country.

With the help of massive American military and financial aid, the governing authorities did everything possible to stop the freedom movement and to terrorize the rest of the population so that the idea of freedom would not become contagious.

According to the children of the freedom fighters who now try to scratch out a living on the small parcels of land ceded them by the government, most of the freedom fighters were Christians, struggling to live the implications of the good news that Jesus taught.

The woman who is the elected community leader says that it is becoming more and more difficult to encourage the coming generation to continue the struggle for human rights, history is taught from the government perspective. And in the local churches, the whole issue of 500 years of theft, murder, rape, and forced conversion is steadfastly ignored. The usual message is "Attend worship. Sing loudly. Read the selected portions of scripture. And one day, you will go to heaven."

In El Refugio, a small town near Santa Ana, most of the people in the Baptist Church are of Indigenous background. Few of them know much about their past. After the great massacre in 1932, when government forces murdered thousands of Indigenous people for demanding fair working conditions, a great amnesia fell over the people. It was too dangerous to remember their language, their culture, and even the murder of their relatives.

On Sunday, the 15th of October, for their morning worship, they too will watch the Romero video. It is part of a process. We study the Bible together, and reflect on the current reality of the Salvadoran people in light of the words of prophets, of the law of God, and of the love which came to all through Jesus Christ crucified. And, like the people of God in the Bible, we try to understand how and why so many terrible things have happened to the people of El Salvador.

As part of the process, Brenda is

helping the children at the El Refugio Baptist School to recapture a small window on culture through artisanía. They hope to be able to sell the finished products and use the proceeds for the operation of the School which is dedicated to teaching the children, among other things, an honest view of their own history.

Pray for the work. Pray for the ability to remember without fear. And pray that God will bless the coming generations with a new dignity and awareness of the beautiful people of El Salvador whom he has created.

Love,
Jim, Brenda and Liz

Joseph Reid
c/o 50 Wynford Drive
Toronto, ON M3C 1J7

01 July, 2000

Dear WMS members,
I write to thank you for your generous support of Bayron Rocha P. in his studies. Bayron is a remarkable young man whose mother supports her family by making tortillas and by cleaning the high school. Bayron is a graduate of the school and volunteers there on weekends. Your giving is making a real difference not only to him but also to members of his little rural community. It is bringing hope and for that I thank you.

Other uses of special gifts in which you may be interested:

Just outside Managua loom the razor wire fences around La Modelo Prison. 2,500 inmates make the eight cell blocks home and of them about 400 are teenagers. Most are hard and even cruel, but, somehow, a few gentle kids are among them. One of them, Erick, was recently released. Because of special gifts, I was pleased to be able to offer a small scholarship to him with which to return to school and, with a good deal of effort, begin to rebuild his life. On his behalf, I want to thank you for your giving.

In the southern part of the country, the archipelago of Solentiname is scattered across Lake Nicaragua. About 1,000 people inhabit 35 of the 52 little islands. (You can read about them in Ernesto Cardenal's classic, *Gospel from Solentiname*.) Not surprisingly, transportation - perhaps especially of the principal crop, avocados - is a problem. Your gift helped buy a new propeller for the community's dug out canoe engine, and continues to make a difference in people's lives.

In Zone Three of Guatemala City, the city garbage dump is home to several thousand people. Because of your gifts (added to those of others) several children have returned to school and now nurture dreams of becoming teachers and doctors. Whether these dreams will bear fruit is up to them. But without your generosity, these dreams would clearly be impossible.

In Batahola, the community where I live in Managua is Doña Ceci. Her husband is an alcoholic. Her oldest daughter, a paraplegic. Her youngest son was being pressured to join a youth gang in the capital. "None of my other kids presented these problems." Because of special gifts, we could send him to a remote rural village where our church has been active for some time. He desperately wanted to go there and he is doing well in the local school. Because of your generosity, he will not be a resident of La Modelo. The cost? 800 cordobas. About CDN$100. Thank you!

Our church is hard at work in Central America and elsewhere. Thank you for your prayers and for your financial support. You are making a real difference!

Joe Reed

NEWS

RUSSIAN CHURCH ON RAILS by Andrei Zolotov

Moscow, 25 October (ENI)--A church on wheels rolled out of a Moscow railway station last week for its first mission in the vast expanses of northern Russia.

Six priests on the train will conduct baptisms, weddings and regular church services, travelling to towns where church buildings and public religious life disappeared under Soviet rule. The church on rails follows the successful launch in 1998 of a church on a barge, also serving isolated towns and villages, in a region 2000 kilometres south of Moscow.

"We bless this church to help people return to their faith," said the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Alexei II, as he inaugurated the train at Kievsky Railway Station on 18 October. Standing beside the patriarch was Russia's minister for railways, Nikolai Aksyonenko, whose department paid an undisclosed amount for the refurbishment of the two railway carriages in the missionary train.

As church and railways officials looked on, the patriarch said special prayers and sprinkled holy water on the two railway carriages that make a stark and colourful contrast to Russia's regular rolling stock. The exterior of the carriages is gold and blue, instead of the usual green. Large icons of Mary (to whom the travelling church is dedicated), and prayers addressed to her in Slavonic lettering also adorn the exterior of the carriages, which have stained-glass windows.

The interior of one of the 20-metre carriages has everything you would expect to find in a normal Russian Orthodox church - a richly decorated altar behind a gilded iconostasis, brass candle-holders set before painted icons, and a special area for the choir. Several small bells hang from the carriage ceiling.

A group of seminary students specializing in missionary work will sing during the services and assist the priests. All of them will be accommodated in the other carriage which also has a small library.

The missionary train's schedule provides for busy one-day stops in most towns along the railway, allowing the clergy on board to hold a number of services, from weddings to Eucharist. The train then travels overnight to the next town.

Patriarch Alexei said in his inauguration speech that the church on wheels marked a new step in his church's missionary work. But he stressed that the Moscow Patriarchate's mission was among its own people, "not in other countries" - a reference to the arrival of foreign missionaries in Russia after the collapse of communism, something that the Russian Orthodox Church deeply resents.

CUBAN APPOINTED TO WORLD COUNCIL

New appointments to WCC staff include three people from Eastern Europe and one from Cuba. The WCC Executive Committee, at its 26-29 September meeting in Geneva, approved the appointment of Rev. Dr Carlos Ham, of the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba, will begin as the executive secretary for Evangelism in January next year. "The arrival of Carlos Ham will introduce some of the exciting dynamics of the 'evangelical celebration' that is presently taking place among the WCC member churches in Cuba, into the WCC work on evangelism," commented Rev. Dr Konrad Raiser, general secretary of the WCC.

Rev. Dr Ham, a pastor in a Havana parish, is general secretary of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba. He has been a member of the WCC Joint

Consultative Group with Pentecostals and is currently vice-president of the Caribbean and North America Council for Mission as well as president of the Caribbean Conference of Churches.

INDIAN CHURCH ORDAINS FIRST WOMEN

New Delhi, 1 November (ENI)-The Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chotanagpur (GELC) in eastern India has ordained its first women clergy, becoming the fifth of India's 11 Lutheran churches to do so.

Three women - all of them of tribal (indigenous) background in a church which is largely made up of tribal people - were ordained as pastors on 27 October at the GELC church compound at Ranchi, in the state of Bihar, about 1000 kilometres south-east of New Delhi.

"This is a milestone in the history of our church," Bishop C. S. R. Topno, the GELC's moderator, told ENI in a telephone interview from Ranchi, the capital of the tribal region of Jharkhand.

The "historic" ordination service had taken place "outside the church as it [the building] could not accommodate all 4000 enthusiastic people" who attended the solemn service during which two men were also ordained, Bishop Topno added.

As well as the Lutheran churches, several other major Protestant denominations here have women clergy, including the Church of South India, the Church of North India, and the Baptist and Methodist churches.

MOTHER OF FOUR DOESN'T WORK? by Kathryn-Jane Muller-Griffiths

Geneva, 6 November (ENI)--"Recently," explains Swiss Catholic theologian Regula Strobel, "I heard a friend practically apologizing for the fact that she doesn't work. She's a mother of four who is active in several local clubs and associations. Women are so used to being belittled for what they do that they end up by putting themselves down."

Strobel was explaining to ENI the concerns of the Swiss Synod of Women, which recently held its second meeting in Biel, a bilingual city not far from the Swiss capital, Bern. On 28 October, 650 women from Switzerland's French- and German-speaking regions gathered for the synod in Biel, which focused on "Work in all its forms" and examined prejudices in the way work is defined.

Strobel told ENI that official statistics and language defined work as remunerated activity. However, many women's groups and feminist economists believe that the term "work" should include non-paid activities by women in social institutions, the home and the community. "Patriarchal structures are present in society and the church, whatever denomination," she said. "In both spheres work is considered to only cover paid employment. Little or no recognition is given to voluntary work or activities carried out within the home or community."

The association was founded in 1987 by Swiss church women as a platform for expressing feminist and theological concerns within the church, state and the economy.

Thought for the Day
Compiled by Eve Stickland

"Take away love and our earth is a tomb."

Robert Browning, The New Book of Christian Quotations, Compiled by Tony Castle, p 150, 1982.

'JESUS WOULD BE A JOURNALIST' by Edmund Doogue

Geneva, 28 September (ENI)--If Jesus came back today, he would return not as a carpenter but as a journalist, a prominent Geneva journalist said today after being awarded the1999 Templeton Prize for European Religion Writer of the Year.

Alain Dupraz, a journalist working for a daily newspaper, La Tribune de Geneve, told guests at the presentation of the prize that the articles for which he had won the prize had inspired him to think about the life of Christ. The four articles, published in December 1999, examined 2000 years of Christianity as seen by Salomon Malka, director of Jewish community radio in Paris, Georges Tsetsis, an Orthodox priest in Geneva, Andrea Ricardi, the Catholic founder of the St Egidio Community in Rome, and Isabelle Graessle, a Reformed theologian and pastor in Geneva.

"Jesus was passionate about communication," Dupraz said. Without the advantages of modern communications tools like the Internet, and using only his mouth "to talk" and his feet "to approach" people Jesus had communicated his message so well that it was still highly relevant today. "That holds a lesson for the journalists of today," said Dupraz.

ANGLICAN DIOCESE VOTES ITSELF OUT OF EXISTENCE - by Ferdy Bagnel

Quesnel, British Columbia, Canada, 16 October (ENI)--Faced with the prospect of bankruptcy due to legal costs, the Anglican diocese of Cariboo, in western Canada, voted on 14 October to disband within 12 months.

Representatives of the diocese's 17 parishes, located along the Fraser and Thompson Rivers in north central British Columbia, met in Quesnel from 13 to 15 October to take the unprecedented decision in the face of a string of lawsuits related to abuse more than 30 years ago at St George's School, in Lytton, 150 kilometres north-east of Vancouver.

David Crawley, Archbishop of the Anglican Province of British Columbia and the Yukon, which includes the Diocese of Cariboo, told ENI that until now no Canadian diocese and - as far as he knew - no Anglican diocese world-wide, had ever gone bankrupt.

St George's was founded by the New England Company, an independent mission agency based in England. It was eventually sold to the Canadian government, with the bishop of Cariboo retaining the right to nominate an Anglican priest as principal.

A former dormitory supervisor at St George's was convicted in 1993 of sexual abuse of students at the school. Following the conviction, a number of the victims launched lawsuits for damages against the federal government and, in some cases, against the church.

Archbishop Crawley described the government's action in taking legal action against the churches as "foolishness". It is counter-productive. They are going to sue the church out of existence, and then they will have lost the grassroots contact with a significant portion of the native population of Canada."

In the past two weeks, "the government has begun to change its stance", Archbishop Crawley told ENI. "The overall direction of the matter has been taken out of the hands of the Justice Department and Indian Affairs and put in the hands of Deputy Prime Minister Herb Gray (who is known in political circles for building consensus. Representatives of the Anglican, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and United churches have recently had two meetings with Mr Gray. They are engaged in what might be called 'meaningful conversations'."

IN THE SOCIETY

SYNODICAL

On September 8-10 forty-nine women from various places in **Saskatchewan** gathered at Camp Christopher, Christopher Lake, Saskatchewan for the annual Women's Camp.

The theme was *Journey to Wholeness* with Helen Isbister as guest speaker. We participated in preparing stone soup and bannock, and made beaded friendship bracelets.

The weekend included a campfire, skits, singing and fellowship. Offering from the Sunday morning service of $276.25 was forwarded to the Journey to Wholeness fund.

When Bob Sutherland of **Westport**, Ontario was asked by the Presbyterian Record who was the most amazing person he had ever met, he answered "my wife, Lottie".

Many in the WMS agree with him and, at a recent retreat at Gracefield Camp & Conference Centre, Lottie was presented with an Honorary Life Membership by the members of the **Quebec & Eastern Ontario** Synodical. The Membership is in recognition of her creative and tireless work for the Society for many, many years, as well as her positive outlook, her cheerful disposition, and her ever present humour. Thank you, Lottie.

- Lottie is pictured, right, receiving her certificate from the Synodical President, Druse Bryan.

"Living Stones" was the theme for the Fall Retreat of the Synodical of Quebec & Eastern Ontario. With the FLAMES initiative in mind, the program included a splendid presentation by two of the young adults who had attended Canada Youth 2000 in July.

- An Inukshuk.

The theme was woven into the bible Study, and with lots of time to relax and enjoy the beautiful fall surroundings, some of the members built some very creative "Inukshuks", which in the Inuit tongue mean "man of stone". These figures were built by the Inuit as markers on the barren Arctic landscape to show the way to others. This image was chosen by Canada Youth 2000 as a neat way to picture stones in the form of a human being, and one of the things that was are called to do, as God's "Living Stones, is to show the way to others. The weekend ended with a most moving worship service during which we shared God's Great Feast.

PRESBYTERIAL

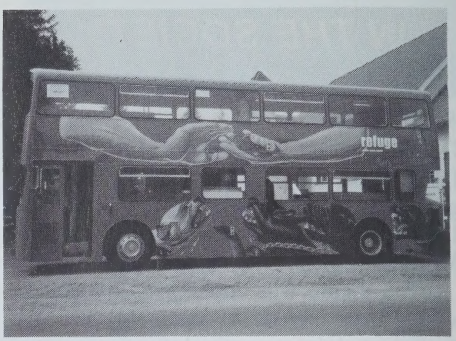
The Fall Rally of **Westminster** Presbyterial was held at St. Paul's Church, Mission, BC on September 6. Rev. Robin Ross greeted WMS members and led in worship, basing his meditation on "Jubilee Year". Margaret Walker was the pianist.

Presbyterial President, Barbara Marshall, welcomed everyone. Betty Siverns, Synodical President, also extended greetings. Valley reports included the women's retreat at Camp Douglas and a trip to a House Church in the Cariboo.

The speaker for the day was Barbara Marshall who attended "Gathering 2000"

in Louisville, Kentucky, sponsored by Presbyterian Women (USA). Along with 5000 women and some men, she enjoyed the activities. Barbara engaged her audience in a brief workshop on the Sabbath, similar to what was done at Louisville. She gave each woman a small "spice sack" to hold as a reminder of the power of the Spirit.

Janet Tremblay, Youth and Education Director, introduced the new study material. Sheila Jakus, vice-president of Presbyterial, closed in prayer.



-Refuge Mobile Youth Center

The **Vancouver Island** Presbyterial Fall Rally was held at Knox Church, Sooke, BC. Rev. Robert Calder of the host church welcomed everyone. President Vivien Williamson welcomed members and guests. Special welcome was given to Betty Siverns, President of Synodical.

Amy Chwojka of Sooke Church introduced guest speaker Rick Wisemer, Director of Youth for Christ, who spoke of the **Refuge Mobile Youth Center** and his mission to care for the needs of street kids, and to share with them the love of Jesus Christ.

The mobile youth center is a 320-foot-long rolling Double Decker bus, which is regularly situated in Sooke and Sydney. Street level kids are those kids who live on the dark side of life and many of whom are into drugs, alcohol, illicit sex and crime. They are all often exposed to the dangers of begging, theft, prostitution and physical and sexual abuse.

The vision of Rick and his team is to see hurting kids come to the Refuge Bus, where with God's wisdom, they reach out to them, befriend them and offer them practical help as well as the hope and healing that comes from knowing Christ. They help the youth access church youth support groups, emergency shelters, addiction counseling and much more.

Kingston Presbyterial Fall Rally was held on September 23 at St. Andrew's Church, Belleville, using the theme *A People In Mission.* A warm welcome was given by Rev. Craig Cribar, who gave a brief history of the century-old building. The Helen Blair Fellowship led the devotions using Matthew 13:31-36, the story of the mustard seed. Marion Johnston concluded with a talk about missions.

Business was conducted by President Judith MacLeod. Diedre Bunnett reported on the Spring Synodical, and Doreen Dath on the study "Living as a Jubilee People".

Guest speakers were Drs. Richard and Ling Schwarz, home from Nepal. The morning session, led by Richard using the text Deuteronomy 10:12-22, taught us much about the people of Nepal. He sang in Nepali, a song written by a local woman.

After lunch we saw slides of the remarkable operations done at the hospital in Nepal. Ling showed a video of the ongoing Christian work they are doing at the church.

Courtesies were given by Olive Brinson. The closing worship was given by St. Andrew's, Stirling.

Sixty-three women registered for the Fall Rally of **Huron-Perth** Presbyterial. They were welcomed to Caven Church, Exeter

by the Rev. Lillian Wilton.

Shirley Aitcheson, Stratford, presided for the day's program, the theme being *Carrying the Flame*. She compared the carrying of the Olympic torch with that of the Presbyterian Church. The hymn, "'Pass It On", was sung with Sharon McNeilly as pianist.

Mary Jane Bisset, Diaconal Minister at Goderich, led a bible study on God's calling of Samuel.

The roll call was answered with one way your local group was keeping the flame going. Each group added one part to build the *Fanning the Flame* logo.

Bev Nichol, Atwood, introduced several new books, available from the WMS.

Following lunch served by Exeter women, Eunice Bisset, Goderich, led a singalong. Devotions were given by St. Mary's WMS with Muriel Sheldon, Barbara Tubb, Elsie MacKay, and Lillian Marziali taking part. In costume, Janet Gibson gave a dramatization of the story of Zaccheus.

Workshops were led by Ina McMillan, Atwood, on making meetings more interesting; Shirley Aitcheson, on the new study book on a Jubilee People; and Lois Horne, North Easthope, as game show hostess for a Biblical "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" contest.

Courtesy remarks were given by Mary McCue, Listowel.

Lindsay-Peterborough Presbytery and **Lindsay and Peterborough** Presbyterials met at St. Andrew's, Lindsay, September 19. Everyone gathered in the sanctuary for opening worship led by Rev. Ron Wallace. His message was taken from the book of Judges.

Rev. David Whitecross conducted the communion service after which he was installed as Presbytery Moderator for the coming year.

Members of the two Presbyterials then proceeded to separate rooms to conduct their respective business meetings.

Lindsay Presbyterial was welcomed by President Linda Grace. Executive secretaries submitted encouraging reports, with special interest shown in vacation bible schools.

St. Andrew's WMS served a delicious dinner at noon.

At the afternoon session, Lynda Reid introduced the studies for the coming year.

Autumn Adventure for **Peterborough and Lindsay** Presbyterials was held on September 23 at Elim Lodge, Pigeon Lake with 130 persons registered. The theme was *Mission 2000 - Encourage Others.*

Following registration, coffee and muffins served by St. Paul's, Peterborough, we enjoyed a singalong with Jackie Kelly, Norwood, accompanied at the piano by Helen King, Warkworth.

Rev. Dawn Griffiths led in the opening worship from 1 Thessalonians 5:11 and Romans 1:8-12. Lynda Reid introduced the study "Living as a Jubilee People". Nancy Millar led in a fitness break.

Guest speaker was Colleen Smith, Coordinator of Youth in Mission who spoke on the *Flames* Children, Youth and Young Adults program.

The WMS of St. Andrew's, Bowmanville presented a delightful fashion show, "Women of the Bible".

The Lakehurst Group led the closing worship with Ada Chapman delivering the message.

The Fall Rally of the **Montreal** Presbyterial was held on October 14 at Margaret Rodger Church, Lachute, Quebec. Presiding over the meeting was President Grace Thornley-Brown.

Amy McMan welcomed us and gave a history of the church. Host minister Rev.

David Stewart led worship, his text from John 8:1-11. The organist for the day was Jim Hayman.

Following reports, Grace led in an exercise break.

Lois Klempa introduced guest speaker Mary Lou Johnston, recently returned from Central America. She showed slides and spoke of the work going on there. Lorna Connelly thanked Mary Lou.

After lunch a singalong was led by Joycelyn McKay. In memoriums were given. Anita Mack, Christian Education Coordinator for Quebec and Eastern Ontario, spoke on the theme *Living Stones.* Courtesies were given by Lorna Smith.

Into the Flames...? was the theme of the **Sarnia** Presbyterial Fall Rally held at St. Andrew's Church, Sarnia on October 21.

Special speaker, Rev. Dr. Raymond Hodgson, referred to the fact that we are celebrating the second year of the *Flames* initiative, focusing on children, teens and young adults. He emphasized the importance of this group of young people, saying that we must encourage Christian faith development and the integration of the unique gifts of young people in the worship and life of the community.

Agnes McCrea introduced the speaker and Ray was thanked by Margaret MacDonald.

After a pot luck supper, Anna Jean McCoskery, Presbyterial President, brought greetings. Music was provided by the Shaw Cousins.

Closing devotions centred around Women's March 2000 with Anna McCoskery, Marion Perrie and Margaret Smith taking part.

West Toronto Presbyterial Fall Rally was held in Albion Gardens Church, Toronto on October 14. Carolyn Jones welcomed everyone, as Presbyterial President, and as a member of the host church. Devotions on the Thanksgiving theme were led by Eleanor Dean. Literature Secretary Madge Cooper introduced some new books.

Following a short business meeting, Dorothy Clark introduced the speaker Karen Plater, PWS&D Resource and Communication Coordinator. Karen outlined the work of PWS&D, and shared experiences of trips she has made to overseas partner churches.

Celebration 2000 was the theme for **Barrie** Presbyterial Fall Rally hosted by Knox Church, Midland on October 11. New President Myrna McFarlane of St. Andrew's, Barrie welcomed everyone.

An inspirational devotional time was conducted by Stroud WMS, followed by reports.

Marie Schandlen introduced many inspirational books from the book table. The Bible Study was based on Psalm 30, focusing on praise and thanksgiving. Reports from the small study groups were shared.

Following lunch a singalong was led by June Campbell, President of Toronto and Kingston Synodical. Mary Lea Craig sang two solos.

Jean Jones introduced speakers Drs. Sam and Maggie Kishan who shared their work in the Presbyterian Hospital of North India and extended gratitude to members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada from their people.

Rev. Jim Kitson, assisted by WMS members from Knox, Midland, conducted a Communion service.

The Fall Rally of **Bruce Grey** Presbyterial was hosted by Knox MacLennan Auxiliary, Tiverton, on September 28. This celebration, one of story telling at its best, was enjoyed by 70 members representing 18 WMS groups. President Kay Remus, Walkerton, opened the meeting. Greetings were brought from Tiverton WMS and

- "Flames of Former Times" with Maria Papp, front row, right.

their minister Rev. Wendy Lampman.

Margaret Robertson, WMS Program Secretary, introduced the study "Living as a Jubilee People".

A corsage and 60th anniversary cake was presented to Beatrice Scott, Port Elgin in recognition of her graduation from the Deaconess and Missionary Training School, her many years teaching in Amkhut, India, and her continuing mission as a WMS member.

Guest for the afternoon session was story teller, Rev. Maria Papp, Welland, who mimed Bible stories in a way that made the stories take on renewed meaning.

A visit from "Flames of Former Times", a parade of persons in costume from bible stories (executive of Bruce Grey Presbyterial), extended the notion of story telling of God's word, and spelled out the real mission of WMS efforts.

- Beatrice Scott, right, cutting cake, with sister Jean, left.

CIRCULATION NEWS

Katherine Allen
Circulation Manager

Thank you to the Glad Tidings Secretaries/contact people for returning the subscription lists in good time. As of November 13, there are 97 lists outstanding. The subscriptions were due November 1, so hopefully we will soon hear from these groups, as it is costly to send renewals.

Please check the label on the magazine to make sure your address is correct. The Post Office requires that you have a box number or street address listed. If there is a change in your address, please notify us immediately, at least a couple of months before, to ensure that you receive all issues.

We appreciate the effort it takes to collect subscriptions each year for the Glad Tidings magazine. Gathering subscriptions does not end in November - it continues all year. Each subscriber can also help in acquiring new subscriptions. If someone has expressed an interest in subscribing to the magazine during the year, send in the subscription through the Glad Tidings contact person in your church or mail directly to the Glad Tidings Circulation Department.

If you know of someone who has difficulty reading the regular sized print, the magazine is also available in large print and cassette tapes.

Katherine Allen
Circulation Manager

- Past Presidents of Ottawa Presbyterial: Back row left to right - Joan Sampson, Margaret Boyd, Coral Lindsay, Jean McKibbon. Front row left to right- Ruth Davidson, Peggy Malcolm, Irene Nesbitt.

A Service of Celebration was held on September 17, 2000, in the Sanctuary of St. Timothy's Church, Ottawa, to declare Closure of Ottawa Presbyterial WMS, formed in May 1887.

Peggy Malcolm opened the Service with prayer and welcomed members of the Presbyterial from many churches in the area; and also Rev. Cathy Victor, Minister of Kars and Vernon Churches, Rev. D. Ian Victor, Minister of St. Giles, and members of Brockville Presbyterial.

Greetings were brought by Mary Moorhead, President of WMS Council Executive, and by Druse Bryan, President of the Synodical of Quebec and Eastern Ontario. Greetings brought by Joan Sampson, Moderator of Ottawa Presbytery included thanks for all that has been accomplished in word and deed by the Presbyterial; and all present were welcomed by Rev. Alex Mitchell on behalf of St. Timothy's.

Regret was expressed that Honorary President, Mrs. John (Ruby) Logan-Vencta, was unable to be present having suffered an accident shortly after celebrating her 100th Birthday, August 5, 2000.

Rev. Margaret Robertson's message was based on 2 Corinthians 4:7: "But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us."

The Act of Closure began with a thoughtful prayer led by Peggy Malcolm, recalling that we remember and are grateful for the men and women who began in Jesus' time relating the marvelous story; and for all through the years who have kept the story alive.

In May 1877, one year after the Women's Foreign Missionary Society was formed, Maria (Mrs. John) Thorburn of St. Andrew's notified the Presbytery of Ottawa that a Presbyterial made up of five Auxiliaries and one Mission Band had been formed.. Mrs. Thorburn, first President of Ottawa Presbyterial, served for ten years.

Following the historical notes, Rev. Robertson spoke again, assuring us that Closure does not mean the end of WMS work in our midst but rather the beginning of a different way of carrying out our Purpose.

The Offering was dedicated to the 2000 Synodical Project supporting Orphan Care Centres operated by Blantyre Synod of the Presbyterian Church in Malawi.

Following the Benediction, the gathering adjourned to the Church Hall for reminiscing, viewing various displays and enjoying the special cake cut by Margaret Boyd.

The Fall Rally of **Brockville** Presbyterial met at St. Paul's, Winchester October 26. President Henny Donkersteeg led the worship from Revelations 21. The choir of St. Paul's sang an anthem.

Eunice Dobbie, Ventnor, introduced guest speaker Margaret Vanderzweerde, South Asia Liaison for International Ministries. Her beautiful slides illustrated her talk on the work in India and Nepal.

Mission work there is based on the needs of the people: physically, spiritually, emotionally. Girls and lepers have no value

in that society and the church seeks to bring them dignity and worth through rehabilitation, retraining and teaching.

Ruth Kirkwood, Morrisburg presented Margaret with our appreciation. Diane Gursby closed with the Mission Prayer. Host church minister, Rev. Carol Bain, pronounced the benediction.

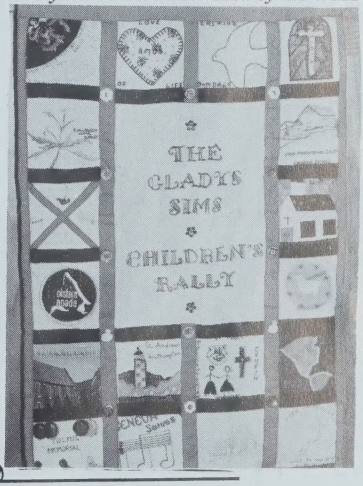
LOCAL

Violet Russell, charter member and first President in 1941 of the Emily Garden Auxiliary of **St. Andrew's, Stratford** passed away peacefully on October 5, 2000 in her 90th year.

Violet's father designed St. Andrew's sanctuary in Stratford and, as she had no siblings, the members of St. Andrew's were "family". A member of the choir for over 50 years, Violet was special.

- What are these women looking at? Check the front cover to see. On page 42 of the Nov/Dec issue there is a story of the Edmonton Peace River Presbyterial who released balloons as a symbol of hope for the future of the WMS.

- Below: Banner made for The Gladys Sims Children's Rally with blocks submitted by the WMS groups.



WMS Quote: **If you don't read every page of the *Glad Tidings* you miss something.**

Send those priceless quotes about the Glad Tidings, and the work of the Society to Glad Tidings, and we'll publish them.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Hazel Dalrymple
Knox, Belgrave, ON

Mrs. Sadie Webster
St. John's, Cresswell, ON

Jean Rowat
Elmvale, ON

Mrs. Nellie MacMaster
St. Lukes-Knox, Finch, ON
(aged 103 years)

Mrs. Jean McLean
Burns Mosa, Glencoe, ON

Mrs. Mary Davies
Knox, Grand Valley, ON

Evelyn Dwinell
Knox, Guelph, ON

Alberta Maude Nicholls
Knox, Midland, ON

Mrs. Alice Ford
Stoney Creek, ON
(wife of the Late Rev. Victor E. Ford. Formerly of Bermuda, Maple Ridge, BC and St. Andrew's, Port Credit, ON)

Mrs. Christine Cochrane
Renfrew, ON
(aged 103 years)

Lillian Powell
First, Seaforth, ON

Beulah Vaughan
Smithville, ON

Elizabeth McGonigal
Mary Cochran
St. James, Stouffville, ON

Mrs. Mary Kives
Miss Patricia Marshal
St. Andrew's, Welland

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St. Paul's, Winchester, ON

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Glad Tidings

March/April 2001

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GLAD TIDINGS challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally and internationally.

GLAD TIDINGS through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired and motivated to action.

GLAD TIDINGS provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS (WD) or by the Editor.

Written in Love

L. June Stevenson, Editor

March 2001

Consider the lilies of the field

It's exactly one month since Christmas. I'm sitting at my desk in a corner of my kitchen, a cozy little nook, just big enough for a desk, a chair and a bookcase. It has taken me just a little over a year in this house to claim this spot. My desk faces the patio doors so there is plenty of light.

Squirrels scurry around outside - one is on the garage roof right now. Soon he'll spot the peanuts on the deck. Hungry juncos are filling their cheeks at the bird feeder. So far I have had 15 different feeder birds visit my back yard. Watching God's creatures is such a satisfying pastime.

Another is watching things grow. My house has a lot of light and everything green is flourishing. Beside my desk is a huge Christmas cactus, a housewarming gift from friends. I have never seen one so huge.

It seems to be a little out of sync, though, for by the end of January it will be covered with blossoms, perhaps four or five dozen. Doesn't it know Christmas is long past?

I am amazed with its strength and tenacity. The first autumn it was outside on the deck past the first frost. Several stalks fell off. I put them in water and they quickly sprouted roots. And then, they bloomed, in water. What an amazing plant! The ones that I planted last summer have now all bloomed. They seemed to know when the time was right.

Or maybe it's a Thanksgiving cactus. I see from my plant book that these relatives of the Christmas cactus bloom in October and January. The book also says this plant can grow to three feet across, which mine certainly is, and as it grows, it becomes a hanging plant with cascading branches. Perhaps I should consider hanging it, although it is so very heavy.

Plants and animals have a way of reminding us of the seasons, and of the love of God who set everything in motion, and who is always here, winter or summer, rain or shine.

In some of the poorest countries I have seen how flowers brighten drab surroundings and put smiles on discouraged faces. In these sometimes drab winter months, it is easy to feel discouraged, to forget that we who are co-creators with God can find reason to smile and to encourage others on the way.

Consider the lilies of the field and the lowly sparrow. They live in obedience to the rhythms of the creation. Put aside your worries and your chores and take a few moments to feel the pulse of nature. You'll be renewed and refreshed. And you'll feel closer to God.

Josephine Butler:
An Eminent Social Reformer of Women's Rights

by Maria Stam

Women of the 20th century have come to appreciate the hard work of female pioneers of the past 150 years. They took upon themselves the risk of being ridiculed and treated with contempt, but slowly and painstakingly they managed to break down some of the male bastions. Josephine Butler was one of the early feminists who strove for the right of women to vote and to obtain a better education.

She was the seventh child of John Grey and Hannah Amett born at Milfield, Northumberland, Britain, in 1828. She inherited her strong religious interests from her mother and grandmother. As a teenager she experienced a year of mental suffering, thinking that God had abandoned her. At the end of that period she had a vision in which God asked her to serve Him. It took many years before Josephine recognized how she would serve.

She married George Butler in 1852 and moved to Oxford where her husband was an examiner at the university. Never feeling comfortable in Oxford, she was glad when George accepted a position as vice-principal at Cheltenham College. Then a terrible accident in 1864 nearly broke Josephine's spirit. One evening her six-year-old daughter Eva, rushing to greet her parents on their return home, fell over the banister and plunged to her death onto the stone floor. This tragic event had a profound effect on Josephine; it inspired her after a period of grieving to dedicate her life to help suffering people.

The family had moved to Liverpool, where her husband became the principal of Liverpool College. The city had its share of misery. There were many abandoned orphans, half-starved Irish men and women, who had fled the famine in their homeland, and many prostitutes — a great number were under fifteen, while several hundreds were not even thirteen years old.

Josephine was not afraid to move among these women and girls. She prayed with them and comforted the sick. As her influence became known, she sometimes was called to calm a riot when authorities were not able to restore order. She opened her house for the most devastated women.

When once a poor woman was thrown out of a brothel because she suffered from tuberculosis, Josephine took her into her home where she died. Eventually their home became too small and Josephine acquired another house she opened as a Rest Home for the poor. Many people appreciated her work, but others called it 'devil's work'.

Her fame spread when she tried to find employment for the girls she had rescued. She began to understand that the underlying cause of prostitution was to be found in the underpaying, undervaluing

and overworking of women, often forcing the poorest among them to work as prostitutes. The unjust treatment angered her and led her to identify with Christ in His human pity towards women who sinned and His anger at men's injustice. She not only felt sorry for prostitutes, she also felt for all frustrated women. The prostitutes were selling their bodies, while the upper class women were marrying for the sake of rank and economics.

According to Josephine a woman had four rights: the right to earn, to be educated, to decide the condition of her life by exercising her vote and to own the money she earned. But the law still regarded women to be under the protection of men.

Well-known women chose Josephine Butler's side. One of them was Miss Annie Clough who became the first principal of the women's college at Newnham. During a visit to Liverpool she appointed Josephine secretary and later president of the North England Council for Higher Education of Women. By 1868 Josephine was asked to edit for Macmillan a book on Women's Work and Women's Culture. But there was much angry reaction by men, of whom many believed the place for a woman was at home and there should be no occupations for women. The greatest problems women faced were based on the fact that there were no female representatives in the Parliament, and people who were not represented were usually neglected.

With the realization that prostitution was the cause of the spreading of venereal diseases, authorities tried to stop the situation by opening state brothels where prostitutes had to live together and were forced to undergo medical examinations. While male partners walked free, female prostitutes could be arrested and imprisoned for minor reasons since they were considered evil-minded. Josephine Butler, outraged, decided to fight the injustice with all her power.

"THE LONGER AND MORE EARNEST OUR STRUGGLE IS, THE MORE EFFECTUALLY IT WILL LOOSEN THE CHAIN OF WICKEDNESS IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD."

In 1869 a Ladies' Association for the Repeal of the CD Act (Contagious Diseases) was founded and Josephine became the president. In December 1869 she published the Association's Manifesto and put eight clauses in it, which were based on her own social philosophy. Considering her work a God-given vocation, she never lost her devotion.

Josephine also started a periodical called *The Shield* in 1870. Thereafter she founded an International Federation for Abolition (abolition was based on memories of slave trade abolition). Her son George became her press secretary. She travelled to the continent and visited several countries. Everywhere she encountered the same situation of state-sanctioned prostitution.

Where licensed brothels existed she found a flourishing market. When in 1880 the Liberals won the election and many of the candidates were abolitionists, the government was forced to re-examine the CD Act. It took until April 1886 before it was abolished. The result of the Act was that the number of VD (venereal diseases) cases had not decreased during its eighteen

years of existence — it had remained the same.

In 1890 after the death of her husband, who had been a great supporter of his wife's work, Josephine moved to live with her oldest son in Wimbledon. She continued to travel to foreign centres, trying to encourage abolitionists. Despite her hard work prostitution still went on, but she was not discouraged, convinced that, "The longer and more earnest our struggle is, the more effectually it will loosen the chain of wickedness in other parts of the world".

After her death in 1906 at the age of seventy-eight, Josephine's name was commemorated in the Noble Women windows of Liverpool Cathedral and in the Church of England Calendar of Worthies.

Josephine Butler never looked upon prostitutes from a moralistic point of view; she did not scorn these women, instead, she tried to understand the social backgrounds that made them choose this kind of life. Her ability to bridge the social difference between her status in life and that of the prostitutes, made her a compassionate and loving person. She felt that the gospels summoned her to work on behalf of the outcasts because of Christ's merciful love for sinners.

Reference: Longford, Elizabeth, *Eminent Victorian Women*, Alfred Knopf, New York, 1981; Jehle, Frank, *Great Women of Christianity,* Paulus Publishing, Freiburg, Switzerland, 1998.

- Maria Stam is a freelance writer from London, ON. She is the author of several books, numerous articles and poems.

Just a Bit of Heaven

Just a bit of heaven,
I know we are meant to see,
Perhaps a casual glimpse
Of what heaven is going to be.

Is it the distant sunset
Against the graying sky,
As if an angel brushed her wing
When she was passing by?

Or the snow that falls so softly
At its own unhurried pace,
To make a cloak of ermine white
With a trim of silvery lace?

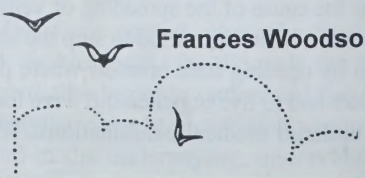
Or the tireless little butterfly
Going from flower to flower,
And fragrant crimson roses
That bloom in the garden bower?

Or overhead, a thousand stars,
A truly awesome sight
Nestled in their velvet bed,
Diamonds of the night?

Perhaps the tiny smiling urchin
On the busy city street;
Or after a time of trouble
To find one's own retreat?

All it is, I do not know;
It is beyond a poet's pen,
But I know that we are meant to see
A little bit of heaven.

Frances Woodson



How Well Do You Know the Birds of the Bible*?

A Puzzle

by Doris M. Johnston

*King James Version or Scofield Bible

1. They shall not be eaten. _____, _____ and _____. (Leviticus 11:18) Leviticus 11:13-19 mentions numerous birds. How many others can you guess?

2. The fir tree is her house. _____ (Psalm 104:17)

3. I am like a _____ of the wilderness; I am like an _____ of the desert. (Psalm 102:6)

4. King Solomon's navy brought these birds. _____ (1 Kings 10:22)

5. Hunt this bird in the mountains. _____. (1 Samuel 26:20)

6. If unable to bring a lamb, bring _____ or _____. (Leviticus 5:7)

7. Are not two_____ sold for a farthing? (Matthew 10:29)

Answers to Puzzle on p 10

God Created a Miracle: The Story of Chet Bahadur Kharel

Margaret Vanderzweerde, Asia Liaison for International Ministries, wrote this story, after being inspired during the Advent service in her church on Sunday December 3, 2000. She writes: "My thoughts wandered to the people we touch every day....That led me to think of one man in particular, who had been touched, and in turn has touched so many others that I felt I should share the story with you. By the time you to read this, it will be 2001 and Jake and I will likely be in India or Nepal. However, I hope to meet with the man who is the subject of my story, and I will share with you about that meeting in future." Pray for Margaret and Jake as they return to Asia for another stint.

Chet was born in 1969 in a rural village in Nepal, the son of a poor family. He was physically handicapped to such an extent that he was not expected to live very long. In Nepal where, at that time at least one out of five children died before the age of four, his survival was a miracle.

The first six years of his life he lay on a straw mat in the corner of the family's dark little mudhouse. Not having any exercise made his condition even worse, but he was born a fighter. He had a keen mind and his determination gave him great strength. Half crawling and partly supported by brothers

and friends he managed to attend the local village school, to learn to read and write. Strong willed, he managed to learn to walk too. When he was 14 he walked to school, helped by others, and when he was sixteen he could manage the 15-20 minute walk on his own. It took him two hours, but he did it!

When he was 18 he had passed grades 1-4. From his teacher he had heard of an orthopedic hospital and training centre recently opened for poor, disadvantaged and disabled children in Kathmandu. After a long waiting period he was accepted but it was considered impossible to do anything for him. Much later, when a visiting doctor looked at his crooked hands, hope was offered. Releasing his crooked fingers, in two separate operations, resulted in some function of his thumbs.

During the four years in Kathmandu he had managed to get some training as well as completing his studies in grades 5-8 privately.

His return to his village was a difficult transition. He had some skills, even a knitting machine, but in his village the market was poor and his brothers often took what little money he had. Having sold the knitting machine the future looked bleak for Chet.

His village was close to the UMNs Amp Pipal Hospital, and he began to attend worship regularly. This was quite a feat as the two-hour walk took him nine hours each way. When in 1992 he was 23 years old, his family married him to a girl of 16. Unable to do any field work, or to be a porter, the family was next to destitute. His faith in God and love for Jesus grew stronger each day, and he became a faithful member of the congregation, being baptized in 1994.

Chet Bahadur Kharel, a young man who has triumphed over adversity, and who gives hope to others.

Then God created a miracle. An Australian couple came to Nepal to work with UMN, as volunteers. They desired to spend three months teaching crafts to local people. Chet was recognized as having a talent for drawing and they taught him to make greeting cards. In the beginning he could make only five to six a day, not enough to support himself. But he didn't give up! Because of his artistic abilities and perseverance, he gradually became very good at it. He draws mostly traditional Nepali designs, cuts them out of rice paper with an exacto knife and adds colour and texture by gluing traditional Nepali cloth between the layers, thereby creating quite exquisite greeting cards.

Now, only six years later, it is hard to believe he is the same man. In 1997 a son was born to them and Chet has been able to fully support the family. It has given him dignity and self esteem that he has never had before.

Since 1995 Chet, a year after his baptism, has acted as a "tent maker" church worker, on a purely voluntary basis, at the Amp Pipal church where for several years now there has been no paid church worker.

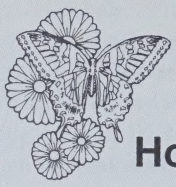
Chet Bahadur Kharel's life story is the most wonderful story of God's transforming power and love. May God continue to bless him and cause him to be a blessing to others.

Chet's story has a parallel in scripture. In Acts 3:1-10 we read the story of the beggar at the gate of the Temple. Peter and John responded to him by saying they had neither silver nor gold but would give him what they had in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Then they commanded him to stand and walk. Can you imagine what the cripple must have thought?: "Surely, these guys are crazy. I have never walked in the 37 years of my life, and they are going to make me walk now?"

Yet, he was helped up. No, he was pulled up and he stood. Then he walked and jumped. He danced. His response was in his joy. He praised and thanked God and followed Peter and John into the Temple. His testimony brought glory to God.

Isn't Chet's story like that? And isn't that exactly what God calls us to? To reach down and help up those who cannot get up on their own? What an awesome God we serve, and what an incredible task before us if we but "live the Gospel".

Watch for Margaret's next story, "Love is...A Violin". Coming Soon!



Hope

He who has never known sorrow
Has never known joy.
We cry only for what we have
known
not for what we never knew.
Still...
It may be less sad
when you know less sorrow
for not having experienced
such a soul elevating joy.
Therefore
cry now...
cry and mourn
bow your head in deep sorrow
be aware of your despair,
but only
to prepare once again
for a new happiness, some joy
that will come again
to lift your heart up high...
Maybe not today, yet...
but one glorious day...
after tomorrow.

Lini Richarda Grol

Answers to Puzzle on p 7

1. swan; pelican; eagle
2. stork
3. pelican; owl
4. peacocks
5. partridges
6. turtledoves; pigeons
7. sparrows

HIV/AIDS in Africa — How One African Church is Addressing this Problem

By Dr. Rick Allen

Rick Allen is a medical doctor sent by the PCC in 1994 to work with the Presbyterian Church in East Africa. Most of his work is concerned with HIV/AIDS preventive activities.

In many countries within eastern and southern Africa, one-fifth to one-third of the young adults are presently infected with HIV; about an equal proportion of males and females make up the number infected. All infected will die from AIDS and when death does occur it is often lonely and painful — for the most part occurring in a darkened room of some village home.

Maybe the only thing outpacing death due to AIDS is the number of new HIV infections occurring daily. In some countries primary school children have a greater than 50% chance that they will become infected with HIV and die from AIDS before reaching the age of 40.

In addition to youth and adults dying from AIDS, one out of every three infants born to HIV infected mothers are themselves infected and will eventually die, most within the first few years of life.

Besides the mere human tragedy of AIDS deaths, the socio-economic consequences are staggering. African countries are losing the very people in the age group that makes the economy move. The millions of children who have lost their parents to AIDS usually need to drop out of school; some end up on the streets. The already limited health care facilities are devoting more and more time and money to the treatment of AIDS patients; over 60% of hospital beds are occupied by HIV infected patients.

HIV/AIDS has been described by some social scientists as one of the greatest if not the greatest problem facing Africa in the last 100 years. The dimensions and the consequences of AIDS are simply mind-boggling. Perhaps, however, the most surprising thing is that so little is actually being done to address the issue.

The WHO, the World Bank and western governments are making money available but little of this money seems to get translated into effective programs in the field. The reasons are complex but include a lack of understanding, a degree of apathy and corruption. Of course, in making generalizations like this, it must be recognized that there are always enlightened individuals within African countries who are making real efforts to address the problem.

A body which has so much potential

to really do something is the church. Unfortunately, the church in general has not lived up to that potential. There are several explanations for this but the decisive factor is that the church finds it difficult to deal with matters involving sex; and it is through sex that the large majority of infections are transmitted. In the meantime, however, literally millions of people are dying from HIV/AIDS.

In discussing HIV/AIDS prevention one can talk about confining sex to within marriage [or to one partner] and the use of condoms. The church has no difficulty in emphasizing sex within marriage, but when it comes to condoms, some churches actually spread untruthful rhetoric about their effectiveness.

This stems from a mistaken belief that promotion of condoms actually increases promiscuity. No studies have ever shown that the promotion of condoms will cause individuals to become sexually active who have not been sexually active. Rather condoms are aimed at modifying the behaviour of those already sexually active, before or outside of marriage, such that they will use a condom during the sexual act and thus prevent transmission of HIV.

The Presbyterian Church of East Africa (mainly based in Kenya) is a partner church of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Like other African churches, the Presbyterian Church of East Africa [PCEA] has had difficulties in discussing sex and the use of condoms.

In spite of these obstacles however the PCEA is trying to move ahead to implement programs and develop policies directed towards alleviating the HIV/AIDS problem. The church at present is taking a threefold approach. Firstly, the church developed a "training of trainers" course; secondly, established ministers' seminars; and thirdly, has brought in policies concerning PLHAs (People Living with HIV/AIDS).

The "training of trainers" course seeks out motivated individuals from each of the parishes (groupings of congregations) that make up the PCEA. These individuals receive one-month residential training over a one-year period. Course content includes facts about the nature of HIV/AIDS, its transmission and its prevention; teaching and counseling techniques; socio-economic consequences of HIV/AIDS; home-care for those with AIDS and theological perspectives of HIV/AIDS.

Once completing the course the purpose of the trainees is not to go out to directly teach the community, but rather to train others to teach community members. Thus, the trainees' newly acquired knowledge and potential for reaching others with the HIV/AIDS message is multiplied many times over.

The ministers' seminars last for a seven-day period. It has been recognized that without the total support of the church ministers, no type of health or developmental program is likely to succeed. Seminar content is focused on HIV/AIDS transmission and prevention and the theological perspective of HIV/AIDS. Upon completion of the seminar ministers are asked to train their elders and to facilitate the work of those individuals in their parish who have completed the "training of trainers" course.

To date ministers who have completed the seminar have stated that many of their ideas and teachings on HIV/AIDS prior to taking the seminar were based on a lack of

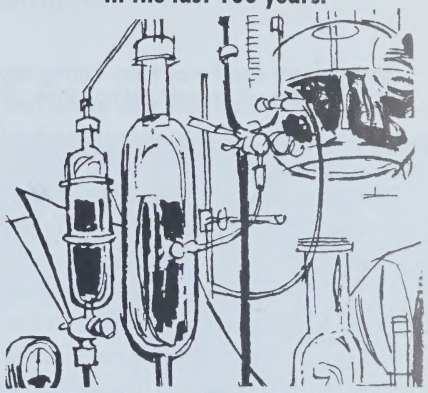
knowledge. In particular the ministers say they now see condom promotion from a different theological point of view. Life is sacred and condom promotion for the sexually active outside of marriage is a justified means for the preservation of life.

The most significant policy adopted by the PCEA was passed in 1999 at its General Administrative Council meeting and later ratified by the General Assembly in 2000. Basically what was adopted was a motion for affirmative action in the hiring of HIV infected individuals for work with the PCEA. This policy is probably one of the most progressive statements made to date by any organization or institution within Kenya. The merit of the policy lies, however, more in its symbolic value rather than its day to day practical value as most individuals are unaware of their HIV status. Never-the-less the policy does make a powerful statement against discrimination of the HIV infected person.

Members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada have also contributed to the HIV/AIDS work of the PCEA through their prayers and financial contributions. Monies designated for HIV/AIDS activities in Kenya have come from PCC International Ministries, the Women's Missionary Society and from individual congregations, in cooperation with International Ministries. As of 2000, the Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&D) has begun to fund the "training of trainers" courses for three years.

The Presbyterian Church of East Africa really has just begun its work. In some ways they are doing a lot but relative to the size of problem they have much more to do. By comparison though most other Kenyan churches have barely addressed the issue. Hopefully, the work of the PCEA in HIV/AIDS will influence other churches to become more active in this extremely large health and socio-economic problem.

HIV/AIDS has been described by some social scientists as one of the greatest if not the greatest problem facing Africa in the last 100 years.



Praise to My Lord

What a love for God I have in my heart.
It is a blessing so great
Knowing that we never will have to part
As long as my way is straight.

He surrounds my life with His loving care
And watches me day and night
So to keep me safe and free from despair
With all His Holy might.

Hopeful I wait for His Kingdom to come
Always on the alert.
Thankful I pray for His will to be done
As in heaven so on earth.

Jenny Schulze

Don't Step on my Caterpillar

by Doris M. Johnston

Many years ago I was baby-sitting my nephew while his mother was in the hospital. He could get into more mischief than I could imagine any child getting into, so when I put my two-year-old down for her nap, I checked on Alan again. He was playing quietly on the verandah.

"This is Herkimer," he said, pointing to a large and furry caterpillar. "Watch him walk down the ramp. Want to see him ride in my jeep? Oh, he's tired, he's curling up for a sleep."

Alan gently picked up his furry friend and put it in a small box. He might knock over my favourite plant, or break a plate a day, but he handled living things with the care of a brain surgeon at work.

I walked down the steps and started to weed the flower bed. Funny how fast weeds grow. From there I could hear Sandee when she woke up, and I could also keep an eye on my small charge.

While I was weeding, Alan built a higher ramp with some of Sandee's blocks, and a road with sand borrowed from the sand box.

"I'll show Sandee how fast Herkie can go, when she wakes up," he promised.

A short time later I heard her call and went in to lift her out of the crib. "Alan has something to show you," I whispered as I buckled her shoes.

She slid from my lap and ran to the front door.

"Look, Sandee. He's going right down the ra.....mp!" Alan's face was full of shock and disbelief. Sandee had gone barrelling out the door, jumped over the blocks and landed right on Herkimer.

"He never got the chance to be a butterfly," Alan hiccuped.

Sandee had not only squashed Herkimeer, she had squashed Alan's hopes of ever seeing his very own caterpillar spin a cocoon and emerge as a beautiful butterfly. His dreams had been shattered.

"Don't step on my caterpillar," were familiar words in our family as the children were growing up. They often made our children stop and think before flattening someone's dreams, ambitions or hopes, with a thoughtless remark.

We would never have bought the house we now live in if my children hadn't said them to me. My husband had seen the house and talked about it incessantly.

"We can't afford it. Wait awhile," I said, and watched the excitement fade out of his face and the hope depart from his eyes.

"You're stepping on Dad's caterpillar," the children reminded me.

It took only a minute to think it over. The struggle we had with payments for the first few years was worth it, as together we watched a dream become a reality.

I often wonder if I would have become a violinist, always my dream, if my uncle hadn't told me I had no talent, and should stick to sensible things like dressmaking and typewriting.

It's so easy to step on caterpillars.

FLAMES Goes to Africa...

by Joan Sampson

FLAMES Tour on Barrie Bridge at Naming'azi Farm, near Zomba, Malawi. Joan Sampson is second from left in the back row.

Writing this in the cold of December brings back warm memories of the tour eight of us took last spring — our African experience was such a rewarding time! We left Toronto, together with Rev. Ian Clark, our leader, and an interesting collection of luggage — everything from pneumonia prevention vests and used soccer equipment to medical test kits — all welcome donations for our African partners. After two nights of flying we arrived in Nairobi, Kenya, to be met by Dr. Richard Allen and representatives of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA).

We were based at the Kikuyu Mission Compound about 20 km north of the city, and took excursions daily from there with excellent drivers — we were glad of their expertise for the roads were not the best...

These trips took us to several of the Church projects: the Hospital at Tumutumu where we met George Loom just prior to his return to Canada — a very well run place in a beautiful setting.

Near the Equator we visited a spinning and weaving project where disadvantaged women are trained for employment, and produce beautiful items, as does a similar project for production of colourful beads and pottery near Nairobi. A cooperative project in microeconomics was in conference under the trees at another site, and we visited two areas where peoples' lives had been disrupted (and some lost) in tribal "clashes" a few years before — the

churches were, and still are, helping cope with this, for many are too fearful to return to their land to live.

The Ladies' Guild in one of these areas is striving to complete a residential hostel for girl high school students — the energy and foresight of some of these people is admirable, but their financial resources are so limited....

At Kikuyu, we spent time with Rick Allen and Rev. Joseph Motoly learning about their work in HIV-AIDS prevention and education with the church people — this is very vital work, as we were reminded by the number of fresh graves which appeared during our week long stay. And it was a joy to have Adele Halliday spend a night with us and to hear of her experiences. We had daily worship with the Hospital staff — the Hospital there has been functioning for over 100 years. The site also includes schools at all levels, a Theological college, and housing for many staff.

In Nairobi, we visited a PCEA-run compound which was an oasis in the midst of awful slums — greeted by happy school children, we spent time touring the site which includes schools at all levels, training workshops in pottery, sewing, weaving, and new areas for manual training and cooking skills, as well as a soccer field. We also visited lovely St. Andrew's Church, and their projects with "street kids", including the out of town "Hawa" project where some of these boys are rehabilitated and schooled.

Sunday worship at Kikuyu was a joy: a well filled sanctuary, maybe 800?, worshipping in English, and the service led completely by lay people. There was competition for front seats!!

We had time for some "tourist" things too, such as seeing some of the wildlife, and shopping.

Then it was time for farewell to our hosts, and to Ian, our excellent leader, who was returning to Canada. And off we flew, over Tanzania in the African night, to Malawi.

It was great to be met by Rev. Glen and Linda Inglis when we arrived in Blantyre, Malawi. They settled us into the Grace Bandawe Hostel, part of a Conference Centre run by the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian (CCAP). It was just across from the Mission Compound which houses the Synod offices, schools, staff houses (including those of Clara Henderson and the Inglis family) and the lovely old St. Michael & All Angels Church, built by Scots missionaries in the 1880's. Linda Inglis was our tour leader, intrepid driver, and solver of all problems!

We were welcomed by the Synod at a wonderful party at the Centre. An outstanding Youth choir made us yearn for a tape recorder and two women's choirs, warm speeches, great food, and such open hospitality made for a memorable evening. Apparently about twice as many people came as were expected, which was a challenge to the caterers, but they coped! The Women's' Guild, Mvano, were especially welcoming, and indeed were, identifiable by their striking black and white uniforms, an important part of all the events we attended.

Our first excursion was a very interesting visit to the Naming'azi Farm, developed on Church land under the leadership of David Barrie and now run as a demonstration farm by Malawian staff who give leadership in many ways. Since

Malawi is essentially a farming country, this is very valuable, and a great asset to the whole area — and it is beautiful too!

Joined by Clara Henderson, we took a two day outing south and east of Blantyre. We visited the Mulange Mission Hospital, near the border with Mozambique. While obviously poor in resources, it provides good care. We were shown two women's wards and two new pieces of laboratory equipment which were provided at different times by the WMS — past Treasurer Irene Nesbitt was pleased to see the items for which she had signed the cheque!

This hospital serves a lot of small children, so they welcomed the pneumonia prevention vests. We spent the night in the restful surroundings of the Likhubula Youth conference centre, and proceeded next day to a remote church at Matawa.

The young Minister there had been a gifted pupil of Clara's, and we shared in a joyous service of music and worship — it was bilingual (Chichewa and English) and lasted three hours. At the end the Mvano danced in with gifts for us — the generosity of these people, of one of the world's poorest countries, was very humbling. People had walked long distances to come.

Linda Inglis does a great deal of volunteer work, and we visited a project which employs many handicapped persons and makes beautiful woven articles. But the most moving of all was our morning spent at an orphan care centre. With a population devastated by HIV/AIDS, there are thousands of orphaned children, and the country is attempting to have these children raised in a family/neighbourhood setting, with relatives or neighbours providing homes for them. These centres for pre-schoolers are one component of the plan, and are simple places. Ours had about one hundred beautiful little people, ages two to six, with a tiny staff, and volunteer help. Three meals are provided. "Auntie Linda" and her party were able to provide diversion and some extra comforts that day, and we left with aching hearts.

We had a great spaghetti dinner with the Inglis family after a tour of the Mission compound, including Glen's office. Sunday morning we attended the Anniversary celebration of the local Church, where the special guest was Patricia Muluzi, wife of the President of Malawi. It was a great occasion, held outdoors, again with much wonderful Malawian music, bilingual, and lasting three hours (on concrete seats). That evening we worshipped in the historic church..

A final journey (after five of us had enjoyed a two day safari — at extra

FLAMES MISSION TOURS – SPRING 2001

MOZAMBIQUE & MALAWI
(NEW DATES: March 12 — April 2)
Tour Leader from Toronto: John Congram
Cost: $3800.
Possibility of one more place
CALL IMMEDIATELY !!

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Contact:
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Barbara Nawratil (ext 259)
at 416-441-1111
or 1-800-619-7301

charge) took us to another rural parish where a communion set was presented (see the October 2000 "Presbyterian Record") and we enjoyed yet more wonderful hospitality — including grilled fish, fresh from Lake Malawi. Outside the church was a new community pump, which had been provided by a European donor, bringing the blessing of clean water to the community.

So ended two memorable weeks. (A personal bonus for me was to meet with three women from Malawi whom I had met in Beijing five years ago — all active contributors to Church and community.) There are more FLAMES Mission tours coming this year — if you possibly can, do join one. Ours was so well planned, so interesting, and we learned so much about two of our partner churches and their people. They have many problems, but their faith is strong and we gained much from them. And we saw a very beautiful part of the world. You would have an unforgettable experience!

Primary school children welcome us to Eastleigh Community Centre, Nairobi, Kenya.

Martha Mwale Ordained, Livingstonia, Malawi

Rev. Richard Fee, Director, Presbyterian World Service and Development sent greetings on behalf of The Presbyterian Church in Canada on the occasion of the ordination of The Reverend Martha Mwale on Sunday, December 17, 2000.

Rick said, "This historic ordination of the first female pastor of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian is an event so many from Canada would have cherished to attend. Please know that we are with you in spirit, in mind, and in heart.

"We in Canada recognize that the journey your church has made to arrive at this day has not been an easy one. You have had to examine scripture. You have had to examine your culture. You have had to meet and discuss amongst yourselves as you would in choosing anyone, male or female, to be a shepherd. We rejoice that you have made that journey. We rejoice in the place you have found yourselves."

He extended most sincere blessings to Rev. Mwale and assured her of our thoughts and prayers.

Celebrating: Children, Teens, Young Adults

Peanut Butter Cookies

by Colleen Smith, Youth In Mission

1 Corinthians 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

I still remember those cookies well. They were peanut butter cookies, but not the usual kind. They were gooey and had crunchy bits in them. I also remember her apartment. It had lots of knick-knacks and pictures and they all had stories. I would visit often with my mother and every time there would be some of those gooey peanut butter cookies waiting for me. I loved visiting Mrs. Gray. Her gift of hospitality and love was apparent every time we showed up at her door.

She was also my Sunday School teacher at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in King City. I was in the kindergarten class and she thought each of us was very special. She thought we were special enough that she would sometimes bring those amazing cookies to our class. I don't remember the stories she shared with me in the class, but I remember her love. She treated me as a special child of God, and I remember her fondly 25 years later. She let me know I was an important part of that community of faith, and that I belonged there even with my gooey fingers.

As we continue to celebrate children and youth within our denomination, I pray that we will constantly remind each one that they are a child of God. I also pray that we will embrace them as full members within our covenant community, gooey fingers and all.

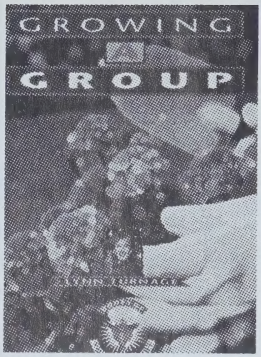
(Note: My parents tell me that Susan Gray was also a faithful WMS member and never missed a meeting. She has since passed away, but I am sure her memory lives on in all the lives she touched.)

Resources for Youth Leadership

The Roots of Who We Are by Rodger Nishioka Y2228 $19.25
The first book in the series begins by looking at what it means to be Reformed in theology and what it looks like in youth ministry. Also covered here are the roles that evangelism and the Bible play in a meaningful youth program along with five theological purposes and specific helps for developing a vision statement. This resource has also been useful as a reference for affirmation of faith classes.

Growing Leaders by Bob Tuttle Y2086 $15.75
This book recognizes the importance of "growing" and supporting effective adult leadership, and points out that youth know who Christ is through the adults who

relate to them. This provides the tools and guides to define, shape and nurture leaders of youth.



Growing a Group by Lynn Turnage Y2061 $19.25
This book is based on the fact that youth need to participate in experiences that are positive, interactive and safe and that young people need to grow in and with a group of other youth and adults. This book not only provides the ideas for activities but the reasons some programs work and others fail.

Sowing the Seeds by Rodger Nishioka Y2063 $15.75

Exploring styles of faith and how they relate to youth ministry helps leaders understand how to effectively reach and nurture each individual in the faith. This book addresses ways of integrating young people into the whole life of the church, new approaches with church/school managing problems and ideas for small youth groups.

Rooted In Love, 52 Meditations and Stories for Youth Ministry Leaders by Rodger Nishioka Y2198 $15.75
This collection of inspiring and relevant meditations and stories is a gift from veteran Christian educator, Rodger Nishioka to all the countless adults who are so giving of themselves and to all who cherish our youth. A thoughtful gift of appreciation.

Forward in Faith

"Another year has come and gone." These words of an unfamiliar carol greeted me when I turned on my radio early Christmas morning. As I write this, only a few days of the year 2000 remain. It does not seem possible that a year has passed since concern was being expressed about what the new year might hold for us.

The expressed concern at that time now seems to be ill-founded. For most of us, the year 2000 was not too different from many previous years.

At this writing, we do not have the final receipts from our Presbyterials for the year. As of the end of November we were below the budgeted figure. Income from undesignated legacies, however, has been significantly greater this year. This has enabled us to augment some of our Endowment Funds from which grants are requested regularly, as well as to set up a new Youth Conference Fund.

We are most grateful to members who have given faithfully in 2000 for the work of the Society. This has enabled us to assist in the mission outreach of our Church, as well as our Church's work with children and youth, in addition to assisting with the support of the Regional Staff. It has enabled our Society to be obedient to our Lord's command to His disciples shortly before He ascended to His Heavenly Father, to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel" (Mark 16:15).

Along with appreciation for the faithfulness of WMS members, we hope that the year 2001 will be one of rich blessing for each one.

Giollo Kelly, Treasurer

A New Face and a New Heart

by Binora Dado as told to Diane Dadian

Binora Dado was born in a remote village in SW Ethiopia, the son and heir of a very powerful sorcerer who was treated almost like a god. Binora's mother died when he was still a toddler and he grew up under very harsh conditions.

In his early teens, while attending school outside his home area, he met a wonderful Christian who led him to Jesus. During the Communist regime in Ethiopia, Binora fled to Sudan as a refugee. Canada accepted him for resettlement and he first went to New Brunswick, and later Toronto. While he was in Toronto, established in a good job and busy in his church, God spoke to him about the suffering of his people back home.

Binora flew back to Ethiopia on a visit in 1992, travelling at great risk to his own region of Gewada. What he saw broke his heart. At the same time his father tried to have him killed, bitterly angry that his son had rejected the life of witchcraft and magic. Returning to Toronto, Binora had no peace until he made plans to go back to Gewada as a missionary.

In almost six years, since November 1994, Binora has established nine churches and seen his people turn from terrified worship of the stars and the moon to joyful life in Christ. His father, now in his seventies, has become a convinced Christian himself.

Her mother loved her dearly, this precious baby daughter whose tiny upper lip was split in half. She was hard to feed, though. Usually children like that died.

But Go-eedee lived somehow. In my part of rural Ethiopia that was a miracle. More than 10% of the babies that are born, die. Another 15% die before the age of five. Keeping a child alive in Ethiopia is not easy, even today.

Where I come from, famine comes upon the land often. It starts with drought. The rains just do not come some years and the poor crops die in the ground. Then the river dries up and people grow weary trying to find even a little filthy water to drink. The land is beautiful in southern Ethiopia. When the rains come, it is a green, lovely place where the goats eat their fill. Even when the dry season comes, the hills are golden and pleasant to look at. But starving people have no time to see beauty around them.

They don't even see food, let alone taste it. Mothers grow desperate trying to feed their children and too soon they watch the children die of curable diseases. They lack even the most basic health care in most of the villages. Women are old and worn out long before their time with many pregnancies and poor living conditions.

Somehow this mother kept her handicapped daughter alive to adulthood. She bore other children after her. And somehow they all grew up.

But then the trouble began.

In our part of rural Ethiopia the oldest child in the family must be married first before the next child can think of it. Usually this is no problem and everyone is happy. But this time there was a problem.

"I'll never get married!" the next-in-line complained to everyone. "My big sister is deformed. No man will ever marry her. My life is ruined!"

I felt so sorry for Go-eedee. She always held her hand over her mouth, afraid people would see her deformity. When she tried to talk, she made a hissing sound.

Then she rebelled inside herself. She decided to take her own life.

I asked for permission to take her away. Fortunately, it was given. Days later I took this terrified, deformed village girl straight out of her traditional world where people lived as they had for centuries, right into the last moments of the 20th century. She rode vehicles, this girl who had never before seen a road. She entered tall buildings, this girl who had only lived in a round, thatched hut.

She saw a wonderful plastic surgeon.

"A hare-lip," he nodded, giving me a date for the surgery. I stared at this highly skilled doctor far from his native Korea.

Go-eedee woke up dazed, a bandage covering her lip. Such a short time to correct the misery and anguish of a lifetime!

"Leave the bandages on for a week," he advised me. "You can take her home now."

I was scared to go back and so we waited for another week. Then the surgeon himself removed the bandage from a very lovely, perfect face.

Tears were in my eyes as I looked at her. Joyfully I took her shopping for new clothes. I wanted everyone to see her as a new person! We hurried back home. Before

- Go-eedee, a new face and a new heart.

we reached her village, we met her sister at the weekly market. She didn't recognize Go-eedee, thinking she was some girl from the city! Then she seized her and kissed her on the lips.

"Let go of her!" I shouted, trying to break apart the two sisters. "You'll rip her stitches!"

Finally they obeyed and we nearly ran the rest of the way. The joy and uproar was almost too much.

Today Go-eedee is truly a new person, inside as well as outside. Today she and her mother both sing in the church choir in her village, praising God for seeing her as someone of value, someone to be redeemed and loved. Her gentle, lovely face is so happy. Six months after her return she was married to a fine young man.

Go-eedee keeps urging her husband to stay in school. She places a high value on my having education and coming back to help our people. She wants him to contribute too.

Most of all, she sees the love of God.

Binora Reflects on Hunger, Murder, Redemption and Salvation.....

Since I came back to Toronto, my friends have been feeding me royally. Every dinner invitation means a feast! I love these times and appreciate all the hard work that goes into such wonderful means. And yet...famine stalks Ethiopia.

The children suffer so much. In all of the Gewada area we have four schools. Parents are forced to send their children but they don't see the need and so they don't give them any support. When the children come home from school, they are not given any food. The parents feel that only a child who works should be fed. In their opinion school is not work.

I wish I could encourage these children somehow, maybe give them pencils and notebooks, maybe a shirt. They have nothing. Many of them will be dead when I return.

Maybe when famine tries to steal away the weaker children these Christian children will pray and miracles will happen. Maybe the Lord will send food somehow.

A rat fed an Ethiopian evangelist imprisoned for eight and a half years under the Communist government. Day after day this brother watched a rat drag large pieces of bread across the floor of his cell. She would try to take the bread with her into her hole but it was too big. Much of the bread would break off. The evangelist would seize the bread with his thin fingers and eat.

Elijah was fed by ravens, the evangelist recalled. And this wonderful rat brought bread for his use as long as he needed it! Ravens for Elijah and a rat for this evangelist. What will the Lord use to feed these children? Oh, Lord, let it be angels!

When I was seven or eight years old, I dreamed of killing a man. Any man. Sitting on a large rock, keeping an eye on my father's goats as they snatched whatever dry vegetation they could find on the sparse hillside, I would dream of murder.

A rat fed an Ethiopian evangelist imprisoned for eight and a half years under the Communist government.

Killing a man marked a boy's transition to adulthood in Gewada. A boy remained a boy in the eyes of our community, no matter how old he really was, until he had killed a man, and was eligible to be married. I remind myself now he also became eligible to be murdered himself! Reaching adulthood and staying alive long enough to enjoy it, was hard.

A man without a machine gun was not a human being in our eyes. Never mind that his clothes were ragged and his stomach was empty. He had a weapon, didn't he? He was a man!

And so, perched on my rock under the hot sun, I took careful aim at imaginary targets with my imaginary gun and dreamed of homicide.

I look at myself now. Jesus Christ changed my heart completely. Now I have given up my own life so that these forgotten villagers might live. When a tough-talking man comes at me in the old aggressive way, I face him now with humour. I don't want to kill anyone. I want everyone to live.

At night in Canada I listened to the children's voices on cassettes and embraced them all in my prayers. Neglected, ragged, often hungry, the children melt my heart with the beauty of their praise.

Program

Margaret Robertson
Program Secretary

Walking With Mary

An Easter Service of Worship

Setting (optional): Prepare a 'path' in your room for Mary to walk across. An open door could be the entrance to the tomb. You could also decorate cardboard to look like the stone rolled away from the tomb. Clothing props could include a head scarf for Mary, a bathrobe for Jesus and a white scarf for the angel.

Portions of the scripture John 20:1-18 are in italics (NRSV).

Narrator: Come, let us step into the Easter story. Let us put ourselves on the path with Mary.

All: I wonder what it was like on Easter morning. I wish I could talk to Mary Magdalene. I would like to ask her how she met Jesus at the empty tomb.

Sing: My song is love unknown verse 1(#220, 1997/#171,1972)

Mary: (to herself, as she walks towards the tomb): Why do I feel so compelled to go to Jesus' tomb? I don't understand this. Like my friends, I am feeling very sad. My head hurts. My body feels heavy. I must go to the tomb. I don't know why, but for some reason, I must go to the tomb.

It is so difficult to understand all that has happened in the last few days. Sometimes I thought I understood Jesus and what he was telling us. Other times I didn't. He could be so harsh — like the time he chased the money changers out of the temple. But when he came near, he was always so gentle and approachable, so loving.

I feel like I have lost my best friend. I wonder how I will feel when I arrive at the tomb.

All: Mary, we are walking with you, remembering times we travelled down unknown paths.

Sing: My song is love unknown, verse 4

Narrator: We can picture Mary walking along the path. Her body tells the story. She appears so sad. Her steps are slow, but deliberate. She wants to go, but she is anxious. Finally, she arrives. Oh my goodness, the stone has been removed! Has someone been there first? She runs back down the path to the village and searches until she finds Simon Peter and the other disciples. She looks like an abandoned puppy who has lost its master. (Mary hurries back along the path — looking for someone.)

All: What is happening? What do you see? What do you hear?

Narrator: Mary keeps going until she finds Simon Peter and the other disciples.

Mary: *They have taken the Lord out of the tomb and we do not know where they have laid him.* (Mary goes back and stands beside the tomb.)

Narrator: *Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes. But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb.*

All: Mary, why are you crying? Jesus kept saying that he was destined to leave.

Mary: (weeping) This is not what I expected. What should I do?

Narrator: Mary sees an angel in the tomb.

Angel: *Woman why are you weeping?*

All: Mary, why are you weeping ?

Mary: *They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.* Oh my goodness, you frightened me. Who are you?

Jesus: *Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?*

Mary: (startled) You must be the gardener, *Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.*

Jesus: *Mary!*

Mary: *Rabbouni!* My teacher.

Jesus: *Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."*

Narrator: Jesus walks away. Mary is left wondering.

Mary: What has just happened? I have seen and heard the most amazing things. This is not what I had expected. But I know that I must talk to Peter and the other disciples about what I have seen and heard. I must go and tell them. I wonder what this all means? Something more is occurring than I can understand at this moment.

All: Mary, we often walk the path of the unknown. We remember your story and especially your faith. We will also go and tell the story of Easter, the story of the risen Christ. We will tell it with all the love we have learned from Jesus.

Sing: Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love #229, 1997 OR Love divine, all loves #233, 1972

Prayer (together)
God of all time, we humbly come before you remembering the great gift and sacrifice of Jesus. We are often like Mary, wondering what all this means and what we should do in response to your teaching and actions through Jesus. Help us, not only to remember the empty tomb, but to share the excitement of the risen Christ with all who will hear and believe. AMEN.

My song is love unknown,
My Saviour's love to me,
Love to the loveless shown
That they might lovely be.
Oh who am I that for my sake
My Lord should take frail flesh and die?
Book of Praise #220 1997

Did You Know? that the **Christian Literature Fund** of the Women's Missionary Society responds to requests for financial assistance in providing books and other forms of literature to organizations in Canada and many parts of the world. Our budget for 2001 is $10,000.

Here are two examples of those who have received our assistance:

Canada

Glad Tidings — $1,000 in 2000 to cover the cost of translation of worship services into other languages, for the microfilming of issues of the Glad Tidings, and the production of the large print copies.

INFACT Canada — $5,000 was sent to the Code Monitoring Project to assist in working towards national and international policies which will safeguard the interests of women and their children.

INFACT Canada is a non-profit organization working to educate the Canadian public and the health care system about the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes.

TEN DAYS 2001 Resources inspire ecumenical community to "Give it a Rest"

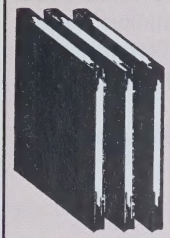
TEN DAYS for Global Justice education and action campaign for 2001 is calling on Canadians to "give it a rest" in the biblical Jubilee-sabbath tradition and think about how our life-styles contribute to increased greenhouse gas emissions causing global climate change. Canadians are also being asked to act as responsible global citizens and ethical consumers by calling on governments (both federal and provincial) and corporations to ratify and begin implementing the commitments made to reduce greenhouse gas emissions under the international Kyoto Protocol.

TEN DAYS for Global Justice is also participating in the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative's campaigns for Restoring Right Relations with aboriginal peoples by calling for the establishment of an independent Commission to resolve outstanding land, treaty and inherent rights and for the federal government's Export Development Corporation to be subject to disclosure, and social and environmental assessment criteria in the financing it provides to Canadian exporters and investors.

TEN DAYS for Global Justice has produced, in cooperation with the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative, a range of resources to support local groups and local churches and individuals to participate in the program. The comprehensive TEN DAYS resource package includes theological reflections; outlines for worship services and workshops; activities for children, youth, and adults; a short drama script; a video; an exciting new simulation game; and opportunities to take concrete actions to address climate change and injustices towards Aboriginal Peoples. Many of these resources are also available on the TEN DAYS web site at www.web.ca/~tendays.

TEN DAYS for Global Justice is a national, volunteer-based network that encourages creative community-based education and action for social change around the world. It is sponsored by the Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and United Churches.

For more information and to receive a complementary resource package to review, contact:
Dennis Howlett or Julie Graham: 416 463 5312/ Toll free 1 877 403 8933



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Featuring Books by Gwyneth J. Whilsmith

I Know God's In Here Somewhere has long been a bestseller for The Book Room and now this Presbyterian Canadian author has released a new book, **Blessings,** as well as re-releasing two previous publications, **A Basket Of Stones** and **Hear The Pennies Dropping.**

I Know God's In Here Somewhere, Reviewed by Betty Siverns
Desktop Publishing, G66692 $15.00
This is a collection of fifty-eight short reflections Gwyneth Whilsmith has written over many years. A scripture passage to read and a short quote from that scripture preface each story. Questions to think about and a prayer follow each. There is also space for the reader's own notes.

The stories relate ordinary situations that anyone might experience, but Ms. Whilsmith has seen ways to illustrate how God works through ordinary events of life. She encourages her readers to have courage and faith that God will help them through the hard times. She celebrates times of joy and ponders the wonders of nature.

This book is a great resource for anyone looking for devotional material for women's group meetings.

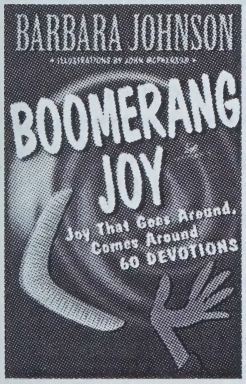
Blessings (A Little Book of Graces), G7743 $16.00.
If saying Grace before meals has become a lost habit in your home, this is the spark to remind you to take a few seconds to thank the Giver of all blessings. This practical coil-bound book has a short prayer for every day of the year plus Graces for special occasions, such as birthdays, weddings or holidays. And it may be true "that people who say grace are less troubled with indigestion than those who do not".

A Basket Of Stones, Symbols of Hope and Faith, G7742 $14.50
The author says it best in her preface. "The reason I share some of my experiences is because I firmly believe that everyone's story has a universality about it

— that my deepest place is your deepest place too. We all suffer black days of disappointment and sadness, but our hopes and joys also shine with a similar brightness. In telling our stories to each other, especially the ones that lead us closer to God, I believe we gain strength ourselves and give hope to one another." These frank and honest stories do just that.

Hear The Pennies Dropping, G7741 $14.50
Gwyn Whilsmith traces her family story during the Depression years on the Prairies with warmth and detail, making the daily life and characters come alive in this unique time and place. She tells of the hardships and of the too few blessings, of human courage, of the strengths of communities and of the enduring values and hopes and dreams. This is a window of Canadian history that will appeal to young and old.

And, Now for Some Humour



Boomerang Joy, Joy That Goes Around, Comes Around — 60 Devotions
by Barbara Johnson, Zondervan Publishing G5613 $17.50
Barbara Johnson's bestselling devotional is now available in paperback. It is based on the premise that our words will return to us sooner or later with astonishing accuracy so we might as well learn to fling a smile. Each devotional is followed by an "uplifter" Biblical quoteand a short prayer.

When You Walk Through Green Pastures...Stick To The Path, Real Life Insights from the Book of Psalms, by Martha Bolton, Servant Publications Y2455 $18.00
Aiming her lighthearted outlook at youth, Martha Bolton uses the human emotions found in the Psalms of David, such as anger, hypocrisy, fear, doubt and hope, and connects them to everyday stories to help young people relate and use it to help grow their own relationship with God. Each story includes *Thoughts to Ponder* and a *Bumper Sticker for the Day*.

Grandparenting Made Easy

Something To Remember Me By, An Illustrated Story for Young and Old G7536 $7.50 *and* **How To Build The Grandma Connection** G7537 $11.50
by Susan V. Bosak, The Communication Project
Celebrate the transition to grandparenthood with these books. *Something To Remember Me By* is a story of a grandmother and granddaughter sharing everyday moments and memories from the time the granddaughter is very small until she is a young woman. It will touch your heart and make you smile. *How To Build The Grandma Connection* is filled with tips on how to encourage a closer bond with grandchildren despite the complications of busy schedules, working parents and grandparents, divorce and distance. Practical suggestions are included for playing, visits, sharing life stories, talking and giving gifts and keepsakes, as well as a resource of best books to share with your grandchildren.

"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7

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Glad Tidings 3/4-1998

MISSION IN ACTION

Patterson
El Salvador

Christmas 2000 — Christmas greetings to you all from El Salvador. As we enter our second year of working with the churches and agencies of the Baptist Federation, we offer up, in solidarity with the ordinary folk of this still troubled land, a prayer that our Lord may be born among us this Christmas so that he might cast out the demons from our hearts and minds and memories, so that he might heal the diseases of those who have no access to medical care, and so that he might teach us and our children once again the ways that will lead us to live together in peace.

Since the last newsletter, we managed to take a busload of people from El Refugio, a rather poor community, five hours across the country to El Mozote, the site of the 1981 massacre of over 700 men, women and children. The massacre was instigated by the American military advisors, and carried out by the elite Atlacatl Battalion. Most people here still don't even know that the massacre took place. Many that do know about it think that the freedom fighters (FMLN) were responsible.

The other night I was chatting with Pastor Ramon from Metapán. We were discussing the latest "healing" crusade to hit our part of the country. His take on it was that these 'charlatans' come from the north with their shiny cars and their fancy sound systems in order to fool the people. They (the charlatans) scream out their prayers, whack the poor tortured souls on the head, and the result is a poor tormented soul who becomes addicted to crusades and campaigns. The demon that possesses them never left. The "healer" did not even know the name of the demon he was trying to cast out. His shouting simply attracted several more demons who now make life worse for the one who has been "healed".

Ramon pointed out the Mark passage to me. Apparently, the country of the Gerasenes had been the scene of vicious repression by the Roman troops. The way Ramon reads it, the "demoniac" was a massacre survivor. He lived there among the tombs of his relatives, his mind tortured by the unjust deaths. When Jesus asked the Demon for its name, the answer was, "Legion". In order for Jesus to heal this tormented man, he needed to know what was troubling him. When he discovered the source of the affliction, in a fitting display of irony, Jesus cast out the demons of this man's horrific past into a self-destructive herd of swine.

There is a woman who lives on the street in our neighbourhood. She dresses in rags. She carries a big bag of rags on her head. She mutters. She shouts. As I pass I will offer her a Colón. Sometimes she blesses me. Sometimes she curses me. The neighbours all say she is crazy. One day, the soldiers from the nearby military base were on parade through the streets. I was waiting for the parade to pass, and I saw, about half a block up, the "Crazy Woman" running toward the soldiers. She

screamed at them, "Where are my children? What have you done with them?" I take it that the name of her demon is "Army", and that she will not be healed until her disappeared or murdered children are recognized.

Where do we begin to heal this brokenness? We begin by finding out the truth and by making the truth known. Sometimes even the people, the victims themselves, do not know the name of the demon that has destroyed their family for generation upon generation. One woman from El Refugio who travelled with us to El Mozote, came to her pastor the next day. She said, "My husband and my father-in-law always told me that the massacres were committed by the FMLN. Now I know differently. I will never vote for ARENA (the ruling party) again. They have murdered our people."

We begin by teaching the children. It is one thing to teach them to come to Jesus. It is another matter to teach them to name their demons so that Jesus can actually heal them, and their children, and their children's children.

The El Mozote Monument: the plaques on the wall in the background contain the names of the victims and their ages.

Overseas Staff Birthdays

May

1 - Jake Vanderzweerde, India
5 - Yasmani Samuel Villalonga, Nicaragua
19 - Luke Inglis, Malawi
26 - Pauline Brown, India
27 - David Onuoha, Nigeria

June

10 - Joy Randall, Taiwan
15 - Wendy Lessard-Clouston, Japan
22 - Rebecca Leona Onuoha, Nigeria
23 - Nathanael Taylor Allison, Cameroon
25 - Christopher Jorna, Guyana

The Baptist School in El Refugio is committed to this healing process. Pastors Elida and Elmer began their small school five years ago with nothing but faith. They welcomed children from the broken homes, from the poverty stricken hovels. Some are the children of ex-soldiers. By dint of extremely hard work, with the help of very dedicated and poorly paid teachers, the school continued to function. By the fall of this year, however, the economic situation in the country had worsened. The teachers could not continue living on $30 CDN per month. They threatened to resign.

Meanwhile, a long forgotten project application finally made it to PWS&D and was approved, and, at the same time, Lakeview Church in Thunder Bay and PWS&D agreed to fund a much needed building program for the school. You would not believe the joy in El Refugio when I called and told them the news.

The project funding means that the school will actually be able to survive for the year 2001. After that, we will see. The

building program means that the school's capacity and learning environment will be acceptable.

Brenda and I thank all of you for your continued prayers and support. We hope you all have a peaceful and faith-filled Christmas. We also hope you have lots and lots of snow...

Brenda and Jim

Emergency Appeal: *Earthquake Hits El Salvador.....*

From: Karen Plater, PWS&D
Date: 1/15/01 4:41pm
Subject: El Salvador earthqake

Below is our preliminary information on El Salvador. PWS&D has opened an account to accept donations and is currently assessing with partners the best way to proceed. Information is up at our website: www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

For about 50 seconds on 13 January 2001 at 11:33 am local time, an earthquake, measuring 7.9 on the Richter Scale, shook the coast of El Salvador. Early reports have counted more than 500 casualties, with many more likely to be confirmed. Rescue crews estimate that 4000 might still be missing, and as each hour passes, the hope of finding survivors fades. The President of El Salvador has requested a donation of 3000 coffins from Colombia. The most pressing needs will be to attend tens of thousands of homeless with no access to food, clean water and shelter.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada staff in the region have reported in safe. Jim and Brenda Patterson based in Santa Ana, report houses there have been damaged, and one Catholic Church has collapsed. "Preliminary reports also show damages to church buildings of the Federation of Baptist Churches in Santa Helena and El Refugio", they say. Ken and Kennis Kim in Guatemala, reported that they felt the quake in their home.

Presbyterian World Service & Development has opened a special account to receive donations to support relief and rehabilitation work. PWS&D is communicating with partners: the Women's Institute (IMU) and the Federation of Baptist Churches, to determine the best way to help the survivors. PWS&D is also supporting the work of Action by Churches Together (ACT), an alliance of 200 worldwide churches and aid agencies. ACT members in El Salvador, Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Salvadoran Lutheran Church have sent emergency teams to the most affected areas. The Lutheran church has opened two refugee centres: one in Santa Tecla for 300, another in San Salvador for 3000 people. Food, blankets and mattresses are being distributed to the refugees as they arrive at the centres.

Please keep the people of El Salvador in your prayers. You can help provide food, shelter and potable water to the victims of the flood. Make a donation through your church offering, clearly marking your gift **PWS&D-El Salvador** and ask the treasurer to forward it quickly. Income tax receipts will be issued. Or send a donation directly to:

Presbyterian World Service & Development
50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, ON M3C 1J7
e-mail: pwsd@presbyterian.ca website:
www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd/
Credit Card donations can be made by calling:
416-441-1111 or 1-800-619-7301

Joy Randall
Taiwan

December 2000 - May the miracle of Christmas bring us the joy that the shepherds and the wise men felt at the Lord's birth. May each love-filled miracle bring warmth, peace and joy to each of us. May our hearts share the glow that lit the sky in Bethlehem at Jesus' birth. May He bring love, peace and joy into this new year.

I am thinking of you all at this special time and thankful for these times to keep in touch with so many of you. I truly appreciate all the cards, letters and prayers from some of you. Through prayers and encouragement and with God's help I am able to continue in His service here in Taiwan.

Our hospital's 105th Anniversary was on November 25th and we celebrated with a Thanksgiving Service for that and our becoming a permanent Medical Centre officially this year. President Chen Shui Bien came so that added to the excitement. Dr. CM Kao, and our PCT moderator were present. I did the prayer of Thanksgiving in Taiwanese. The hospital and our nurses' choir sang. Several of our previous staff returned. It was a special time of Thanksgiving.

It has been one year since the earthquakeand buildings, homes are still not rebuilt. With typhoons, rains and more earthquakes it is particularly difficult in the mountain areas. There have also been two drastic typhoons this past summer flooding and destroying homes, etc.

The moderator of the PCC, Rev Glen

Prayer Requests

Taiwan

1. for the people struggling with rebuilding their lives after the earthquake.
2. for continued service to the people in central Taiwan and continuing to attain the high standard as a Medical Centre.
3. for continuing health for Joy Randall to be able to serve Him well.

Nepal

1. for health, safety and spiritual refreshment for the Allison family, as well as wisdom in parenting and in interacting with the Kotoko people.

Romania

1. for continued strengthening between the churches in Romania and in Canada,
2. for Brian Johnston's ministry of music.

El Salvador

1. for healing from brokenness and betrayal for the Salvadoran people.
2. for strength and health for Jim and Brenda Patterson and all involved in earthquake relief efforts.

India

1. for victims of the earthquake that hit India in the last week of January. Reports are still coming in. PWS&D has launched an emergency appeal for the worst hit areas.

Davis, was here in August and one of the areas he did visit was the various earthquake centres set up by the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan and the various ways they are trying to help the people. He also visited our hospital, met with many friends and administrators and I took him to Erhlin to see the development there.

I am the full time Nursing director in our Erhlin branch hospital, and I am there three days a week. Erhlin branch is much like Changhua Hospital was when I arrived 30 years ago with 150 beds and 300 on staff. I hope to help improve the quality of nursing care and education of our staff there. Miss Hwang is supervisor and we have eight head nurses there. I am able to make rounds more often to see the patients and the situation on the wards. Also our Christian outreach along with the Pastoral Care Dept witnesses to the patients and the staff. We have various programs for the staff in English, Choir and fellowship.

My responsibilities are less in Changhua as there are three other Directors of Nursing. I am in Changhua for meetings and to teach English to the Pine Evergreen University (senior's university) and to the Head Nurses and some doctors.

Over the last few months our Nursing Choir in Changhua visited two churches to sing in the service and to have a screening clinic and help the members if they have a medical problem. Then the Erhlin Hospital choir went to the mountains to churches near A Li Shan to both sing and hold a clinic. It was a great experience for us all. I also went to a place in August where the Ru Kai tribe lives and was amazed at how both of these places have integrated their culture into their villages in artwork. Their homes have improved greatly but this culture is a great addition.

Our Eng Hok church continues to grow and there were ten adult/teen baptisms and five to six children in August. They have adult Bible Study after church now and usually there are over 80 at different levels. They want me to do an English Bible Study there but right now I am doing English Church School for teens once a month. The Taiwanese people are truly blessed and now able to give (and do give generously) in their offerings. Our church even with some its own building to pay for still helps smaller churches in our Presbytery with our birthday money.

You may recall that our sister Bunan church gave us a very large offering when we built our church and we were embarrassed to accept such an amount. Well, during the earthquake their church was ruined so now we are giving an offering back which amounts to the same. My nephew Andrew was here for six weeks in the summer and enjoyed teaching English to doctors and nurses.

Since I got the Medical Award for recognition of Medical work in Taiwan April, I was asked by that committee to speak at the Buddhist University in Hualien to 250 first year medical, nursing, social, and public health students. Miss Lee from the newspaper introduced me and told them about the award in hope that they might receive it one day. I spoke on "the Missionary Calling to Medical Work in Taiwan", my call and the various things done by missionaries over the last 100+ years and encouraged them to be involved in the medical work in the future. Recently I was interviewed by two other groups of medical university students. I have

been on TV a few more times and am preparing for a 45-minute show on the Buddhist TV.

I am keeping well but still keep an eye on my blood pressure and heart, praying the medicine will help. I am very busy but have slowed down some. May God give you a special blessing and miracles at this Christmas and in the New Year.

Love, Peace and Joy.

Joy Randall

Sean & Leslie Allison
Yaounde, Cameroon

Summer 2000 — We are coming to the end of hot season here in Makary, and rainy season is fast approaching. For the last three months, with the exception of two days, we've had temperatures of over 100 degrees F. The Kotoko greeting during this time is, "Kilafia go dunia a ya fu?" "How is it going with the world becoming fire?"

We try to find ways to cope with the heat. One way is to get up early before the sun heats the house too much. At 5:45 a.m. the temperature inside our house is a mere 94 degrees. Josiah and Nate have kept cool eating homemade Popsicles and splashing around in a plastic pool on our porch. This is great entertainment for the Kotoko children who like to spend their days watching all we do.

Before going to sleep at night, we take showers and without drying off, go straight to bed and lie beside our trusty eight-inch solar-powered fans. I keep a spray bottle handy beside the bed, and periodically in the night I mist myself when I get too hot. I have discovered one nice thing about hot season. It is the perfect temperature in my kitchen for bread dough to rise and for making yogurt. Nevertheless, we are more than happy to be saying good-bye to hot season for a while.

We learned a few things last rainy season. One of them was that our roof leaks. So Sean has been busy trying to repair that before the rain arrives...pretty hot work on a tin roof under the West African sun. We also learned the hard way that it is not a good idea to drive to Makary in the rainy season. Almost a year later, when it hasn't rained in eight months, our boys still ask if we are "stuck again" when we stop for some reason along the road to Makary.

This season we are planning to drive out to Makary in early July before the heavy rains hit and stay there until the roads dry up again in late October. I've been busy making a list of all we will need to buy in Maroua, our supply town, during our last shopping trip before rainy season. Among the items on my list are: 65 pounds of flour, 35 pounds of milk powder, 30 pounds of oats, 25 pounds of rice, 30 sticks of butter, 32 rolls of toilet paper and 9 gas bottles to keep our fridge and stove running. It's a good thing our boys aren't teenagers yet. What a shopping list that would be!

Josiah is four and a half now and Nate has just turned three. Over the past two months, Josiah has learned to tie his shoes, swim without floaties and ride a bicycle without training wheels. The only problem is that Nate enjoys riding the same little bike with training wheels. So Sean gets to take them on and off throughout the day.

Nate likes to pray for his family. His common meal time prayer is, "Dear God, help Joe to be a good boy, help Daddy to be a good worker and help Mommy to be a good cooker!"

Sean and I both are making progress on our Kotoko language learning. Sean has been given the Kotoko name "Abisho", and when he is out visiting in Makary and nearby villages, he often hears the phrase "a she mpadi!" "He speaks Kotoko!"

We have collected over six hours of Kotoko texts. Sean found storytellers in Makary as well as several other Kotoko villages who were willing to have him tape record their lively tales. For the first time ever, these stories are being written down. We have found these texts helpful for language learning, linguistic analysis and culture learning. In Kotoko folk tales, the hyena is always being outsmarted by the other animals. The squirrel is the crafty one and, of course, the lion is the king. We are looking forward to lots of good language learning opportunities during these next few months as we are "rained in". During this time, we will be more isolated than usual.

Lezlie, Sean, Josiah and Nathanael

Brian Johnston
Romania

Annual Report 2000 — The year 2000 was one of increased activity for all those involved, and the partnership between The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the Hungarian Reformed Church in Romania was considerably strengthened through the visit of several Canadian Presbyterians.

My English students have continued to provide me with many interesting challenges and I continue to have a good working relationship with Celia Kenny and the Church of Scotland.

In March a small group from my choir sang for the opening of the Handicapped Centre in Cluj. This centre is unique in Romania and should provide inspiration for others to improve educational facilities for handicapped people.

The Flames Tour organized through International Ministries was a real highlight for us. Six very interested Canadians spent four days in Romania. The students performed a wonderful concert in our seminary when the guests arrived and all were pleased with the results. Anne Marie Klassen spoke to the audience, bringing greetings from Canada and presented the bishop with a lovely banner.

There were many occasions for interaction with the students and on the last day we participated in a church service in Banffyhunyad, a smaller city 50 kms from Cluj. There was an opportunity to view my photos of Romania and I was very happy that my Canadian colleague David Pandy could open the exhibition. The departure of the Canadian guests from my choir members was so moving that the van turned back to take another photo.

The YIM continued its participation in Eastern Europe this summer and two Canadians, Sonya Henderson and Lynne Steffy made a notable contribution to the planned activities in Hungary, Croatia and in Romania.

In Romania I organized a week's intensive English course for my choir members

Brian conducting the choir, Christmas 2000, at the Theological Institute.

which was greatly enriched by the Canadian participants who collaborated with three local Hungarian teachers. Many of my students have continued to correspond with them by e-mail so we can say that the success of the camp is still ongoing.

During September I was at home and was greatly blessed by my meetings with several encouraging people at the church offices and in my home congregation — Knox, Waterloo. At this time we started to do some serious planning for the proposed Canadian tour of my choir in August-September 2001. ***Watch for more later!**

On returning to Romania I prepared for a concert and exhibition which took place in Udvarhely, a Hungarian populated city about 300 kms from Cluj. On Sunday October 23rd the choir sang in three church services as well as the opening of the exhibition at 6:00 in the culture house. It was a demanding day but the members kept their energy and surpassed all my expectations. What a special group of people I am blessed to work with.

Our first "international" appearance was in November when were invited to sing in Sarospatak in Hungary. On Saturday night we sang a concert in the theological seminary and on Sunday morning in the big reformed church. We were well received by our hosts and the pastor organized a wonderful excursion in the surrounding area. It was exciting to cross the border together with my choir members.

Before Christmas we sang in the annual Christmas concert in the institute. We offered some new items [and some familiar traditional carols]. As well, one of our members, Robert Szilvester sang from Handel's Messiah. Robbie is sponsored for his singing tuition by a Canadian sponsor who has a special interest in music.

Increasing numbers of Canadians are taking an active interest in Romania. We pray for continued strengthening between our two churches of our spiritual energies in Christs's name.

"Every time I feel the spirit
Moving in my heart I will pray."
God bless all those who read this,
Brian Johnston

Marlene Buwalda
Taiwan

Taiwan 2000 — My second and final term has begun with a small typhoon but actually no major damage here.

My students are keeping me busy. This year I decided to make a quilt with one student, and others have come out to help. I will later start a new one for each student to invent a square of their own so I can put one whole thing together and remember them all.

Thursday nights I have non-English major free talk and open house afterwards. It has been a very fun time for both students and myself.

A big challenge for me is allowing students to see the love in everyone and to

forgive others. The outside pressures of life (money) are great, but I do my best and hope God's love will pass through me into some of their hearts too.

One of our sophomore English department students had to be sent to the army this semester, and since our school is not yet recognized by the Government he therefore failed. After the army he will have to begin again. Presbyterian Bible College is in the midst of applying for recognition along with all the Christian colleges (seminaries) but they say it will be a long process.

The two-year necessity has recently been reduced to a year and ten month responsibility for all Taiwanese young men starting at the age of 21, I think. I have heard it is very difficult for Christian young men to go there — a lot of mental abuse and not much free time.

One of my students said he learned to pray quickly, silently without anyone noticing since meals begin at the sound of a bell and all begin as commanded. Another, who is there now doesn't like the words used by the commander. Please pray for them.

Marlene Buwalda

"I"-Witness

Driving home, I passed a young boy, sitting cross-legged at the end of his family driveway near the road. Held to his ear was a cell phone and what he was hearing seemed to make him oblivious to happenings around him.

As I drove on, I thought of that conversation being carried on through a small object without any connection to any visible source of power. But there was a source of power, unseen, contained inside the phone, making it accessible any time to the owner.

Cell phones provide communication between people as well as a sense of protection, assurance and safety. They are a common means of communication today and are taken for granted; the wonder of the invention and its implications are lost.

Then I thought of the believer's "cell phone". It needs no instrument. Anytime, anywhere, we can be in instant communication with our heavenly Father just by turning our thoughts to Him. Each one of us has a private line, free of "busy" signals. God is always available, always listens to us, and never misunderstands, forgets, puts us on hold, allows interruptions, or asks us to call back later.

We can talk as long as we choose. We can tell Him our troubles, wants and needs, and those of others. When we ask for help in particular circumstances, He will answer, in His own time, as He knows best. God is always ready to just chat with us and tell us He loves us. We return His love, thank Him and simply enjoy His presence.

We can't lose the phone; it is always with us, charged with Power, and always ready for use. Our conversations are confidential and no one knows when we are "on the phone". There are no charges or time restrictions, and its use doesn't cause other people inconvenience. Instructions for use are simple: just ask!

Even more amazing than the cell phone is the privilege of talking and listening to our Creator. His love is such that He provided the way, through the Lord Jesus, for us to know Him, who is more willing to give than we are to receive. Call Him anytime!

E. Jean Abrams, Cobourg, ON

NEWS

Korean Women Encouraged - Joanne Instance

Although Korean women have been graduating from the theological colleges in Canada, they have not yet been called to work as ordained ministers in the Korean congregations of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, delegates to an international women's leadership seminar co-sponsored by the WMS Presbyterial of Western Han-Ca were told.

The Rev'd Hae Kyung, Moderator of the Korean Christian Church in Japan, spoke at the seminar and encouraged the women present to develop themselves and recognize God's role for women in leadership. She reminded them of the influence of mothers and grandmothers in family life.

Dr. Hee Won Kim, an ordained elder and president of the Women's Missionary Society in Korea, described the work done by Korean women in missions around the world.

Grace Kim, a doctoral candidate at the Toronto School of Theology, talked about her personal experience, the racial discrimination she encountered in Canada when she arrived from Korea at age 5, and then her rejection by her own cousins when she returned to visit Korea several years later.

Kim described herself as an "in-betweener", saying she had to struggle to find her own identity. She decided to study theology, and continued with her doctoral studies after although she said, "I was told, 'God would be happier if you had a baby rather than a Ph.D.'".

The Rev'd Nancy Cocks, Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology at Vancouver School of Theology, identified the particular gifts of women as completing the image of God. She explained that Genesis 1:27 says God created humankind - both male and female - in God's image, and both are needed to complete the whole image of God.

Dr. Tamiko Nakamura Corbett, former Moderator of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and former member of WICC, was the keynote speaker at the seminar. She recalled that she was once introduced as "a foreign piece of goods but inside she is the same as us."

As a unique and "bi-cultural" woman, she said that she had also suffered an identity crisis, but felt called to be a bridge of understanding between the immigrants to Canada and their new country. "Those who are without power are free to work for change," she concluded.

- WICC member Joanne Instance attended this seminar as national representative of the Presbyterian Women's Missionary Society. The seminar "Forgotten Treasures: Sacred Gifts of Women in Ministry" was held in Vancouver on May 30 and 31, 2000.
- Used with permission from *the wick*, Newsletter of the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada, Spring 2000, Vol: 28 Issue:2

India's Legacy of the Apostle Thomas - Anto Akkara

Kottayam, India, 8 December (ENI)--In the 16th century when the Portuguese arrived on India's south-western coast, they were astounded to find a thriving Christian church, tracing its roots back to the Apostle Thomas, who is believed to have brought Christianity to India in the year 52.

Today, there are seven million "St

Thomas Christians" in the southern Indian state of Kerala. However, although in their faith they share common origins and heritage, the Christians are divided into several denominations.

The denominations include the 3.3-million member Syro-Malabar (Catholic) Church, the Orthodox Church (with 2.5 million members in several different churches), the Mar Thoma Church (with 800,000 members) and the Syro-Malankara Church, which has 380,000 members and also comes under the jurisdiction of the Catholic Church.

All the churches take pride in their apostolic origin. St Thomas, Jesus' "doubting" apostle, is believed to have arrived on the Arabian Sea coast of Kerala and died a martyr 20 years later in what now is the neighbouring state of Tamil Nadu.

The church that traced its foundation back to Thomas was united until a revolt against the Portuguese missionaries in the 17th century. But even today, members of all these churches have much in common and are frequently described as "Hindu in culture, Oriental in worship and Christian in faith".

Thus, church feasts and fasts, marriage ceremonies, rites associated with birth and death, the training of clergy and the administration of the churches all became influenced by Hindu customs. For example, rather than giving a wedding ring, the bridegroom ties a "tali" - a tiny golden cross resembling a Hindu wedding mark - around his bride's neck. Similarly, Hindu fertility rites take place during the reception after the church marriage ceremony.

And Christian fasts here are observed with Hindu austerity - church members give up even milk and eggs during Lent. In a land where kneeling is not the general practice for worship, St Thomas Christians prefer sitting, squatting or standing.

A former president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, Archbishop Powathil said that the different churches belonging to the St Thomas tradition expected that one day they would again be in communion. "That's why the ecumenical movement is on," he added.

Church of Pakistan Ordains Women Deacons - Anto Akkara

New Delhi, 14 December (ENI)--The Church of Pakistan has madehistory by ordaining its first two women deacons, despite civil court action by another church which believes that the Bible bans women from the clergy.

The diaconate is the first step towards the priesthood, and deacons have an important role in church liturgy and ministry. The church is the first in Pakistan to open the ranks of clergy to women. However, Christians are a tiny minority - about two per cent - in this Islamic country of 140 million people.

The Church of Pakistan, which has about 800,000 members, is a united church inaugurated in 1970, bringing together Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans and other Protestants.

"We have gone ahead with what we believe is right. We have made our commitment to it," Bishop Samuel Azariahs, moderator of the Church of Pakistan, told ENI after the ordinations on 21 November in his diocese of Raiwand, 25 kilometres north of Lahore. One of the new deacons is the bishop's wife, Kushnud. Both women deacons, along with two new male deacons ordained on the same day, have been working

for the church as catechists.

The civil court action to try to block the ordinations was initiated by a retired army major, Timotheus Nasir, who is moderator-secretary of the United Presbyterian Church of Pakistan (UPCP), a breakaway church in the Presbyterian tradition. He told ENI: "Women's ordination is not authorized by the Bible."

The women who had recently been ordained had in fact been performing diaconal duties for a long time - helping pastors to manage funds and personnel, visiting the sick and planning church work, the bishop said. "With the ordinations, we are only formally recognizing their role in the church."

Countries Pressured to Sign Greenhouse Gas Treaty - Ferdy Baglo

Toronto, 11 December (ENI)--An extraordinary meeting in Ottawa on 6 and 7 December has failed to resolve the international impasse in negotiations for an agreement limiting greenhouse gas emissions.

Senior officials from Canada, the United States, Australia and Japan met counterparts from the European Union to try to resolve the differences that caused the failure of the 6th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP6) held in The Hague in November. That conference was suspended when it failed to reach an agreement on the rules for implementing the Kyoto Protocol which was adopted at COP3 in Kyoto, Japan, in 1997.

Though many countries have signed the Kyoto Protocol, many national legislatures have not ratified it, as is required. Most industrialized nations have been waiting to see what the rules will be - a reason why the COP6 agenda is so important, according to observers.

David Hallman, energy and environment program officer for the United Church of Canada, and environment coordinator of the World Council of Churches' climate change program, told ENI: "There is a lot of concern [among the churches] because the general direction of the negotiations since Kyoto in 1997 has been in a direction that we found incompatible with the responsibilities of industrialized countries."

He added: "The churches see climate change as a prime example of the imbalance between human society and God's creation. It is particularly a concern from an ethical perspective because it is being caused largely by emissions from the industrialized countries - the rich nations - but the consequences will be suffered disproportionately by the poorer developing nations and by future generations. We view it as an issue with significant ethical dimensions."

"The danger is already now," Hallman told ENI. "The incidence of increasing storm activity, the incidence of erratic weather patterns in many parts of the world, the rising sea levels, and the general warming of the atmosphere have already been documented, and, according to scientists, will get much worse if action is not taken soon."

Individual Christians have a role to play, according to Hallman. "There is a lot that people can do within their own lifestyles to reduce their use of energy and become more energy-efficient. There are many good resources...to help people make those lifestyle changes."

Nicaraguan Pastor-Politician Sets up New Party - Paul Jeffrey

Managua, 15 December (ENI)--A Pentecostal pastor who became a leader of Nicaragua's revolutionary Sandinista movement is fed up with the organization's leaders and will form a new party to compete in next year's national elections.

Miguel Angel Casco resigned from the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) last March, but still remains a member of Nicaragua's National Assembly.

Casco maintains he is still a revolutionary. "I continue being a Sandinista. I just can no longer function within the structure of the Sandinista party," he told ENI.

The leftist Sandinistas overthrew Anastasio Somoza, a US-backed dictator, in 1979. During the 1980s they resisted efforts by the US-sponsored Contra rebels, formed from the remnant of Somoza's National Guard, to retake control of this Central American country.

In 1990 the Sandinistas lost power in general elections. Last month they won elections for mayors of 11 of the country's 17 provincial capitals.

Oikocredit, A 25-Year Lesson in Ethics - Stephen Brown

Geneva, 15 December (ENI)--Twenty-five years after its launch, a church-sponsored international development bank is a "growing organization", according to the president of its board of directors, Zanele Mbeki, South Africa's first lady.

The Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society (EDCS) was set up by the World Council of Churches in 1975 to provide churches and church-related organizations with an ethical investment instrument directed at the interests of the poor. Churches world-wide were urged to invest in EDCS to promote development projects, even if they gained lower financial returns than through mainstream investments.

Oikocredit, the society's name since 1999, today has 465 organizations, churches and church-related organizations, as members, and more than 18,000 local church communities and individuals around the world who invest in Oikocredit via supporters' associations. Oikocredit supports about 300 groups and enterprises in developing countries.

The impetus to found EDCS came from the 1968 assembly of the World Council of Churches in Uppsala, Sweden, where young church activists criticized church investment policies, claiming that although churches were investing in industries linked to the Vietnam war or apartheid, there was no means by which they could invest in projects more closely linked to the Christian message.

Church treasurers, initially skeptical, suggested that the money lent might not be repaid. However, Oikocredit is proud that in 25 years no shareholders have lost "one penny" of their investment. Losses in project funding have been absorbed by a specially created fund.

According to the latest annual report, its share capital increased to 120.7 million Euros (US$106.69 m) in 1999 - an increase of E15.2 million compared to the previous year. Over the same period, project funding reached a level of E12 million (US$10.61m), an increase of almost 50 per cent over the previous twelve months.

Note: The Women's Missionary Society has invested $75,000 in Oikocredit.

In the Society

Synodical

For their Synod Youth Conference held at St. Mark's, Moose Jaw, last April, the **Saskatchewan Core Committee** was invited to make a "mission" presentation.

Members put together displays on national and international mission work and workers; a display on Cuba, the mission study for the year, and one on PWS&D.

To test the young people on what they had learned from the displays there were quizzes, including one entitled "Who wants to be a Presbyterian?" In return the young people ended with a little skit about being a missionary. This was a wonderful experience both for the youth and the WMS members.

Presbyterial

On December 2, 2000 members of **Westminster** Presbyterial met at Gordon Church, Burnaby for the annual Christmas dessert party.

Delicate little "angels", made by Cathy Jeatt, adorned each place setting as the women enjoyed the desserts prepared by members of the Executive.

The president, Barbara Marshall welcomed everyone and opened with prayer. Later, she displayed a colourful baby's crib quilt made by Sheila Jakus from the two-inch squares of cloth Barbara had brought back from the Conference in Kentucky that she attended. The quilt will be given to Atira House, White Rock, a home for battered women and children.

Mrs. Marshall introduced the Bell Ringer's choir from Calvin Church, Abbotsford. They delighted their audience with special music composed for bells, and with Christmas carols.

With Margaret Walker at the piano, carols were sung. Synodical President, Betty Siverns, extended greetings.

The fall rally of **Brockville** Presbyterial met at St. Paul's, Winchester, October 26, 2000 in the evening. President Henny Donkersteeg led the worship from Revelations 21. The choir of St. Paul's chose an appropriate anthem. Eunice Dobbie, Ventnor introduced guest speaker Margaret Vanderzweerde, South Asia Liaison for International Ministries. Her beautiful slides showed the work being done in India and Nepal.

Ruth Kirkwood, Morrisburg, presented Margaret with our appreciation for her work. Diane Gursby closed with the Mission Prayer. Host church minister, Rev. Carol Bain pronounced the benediction. Artifacts from Asia, and a Christian supply table was viewed over fellowship and lunch in the Church hall.

Local

The **Hildur Hermanson Auxiliary** of the WMS at **St. Andrew's, Saskatoon**, honoured a faithful member recently.

Lillian Carpenter retired after 27 years of dedicated service as Treasurer and Glad Tidings Secretary. She joined the Auxiliary in the late 1960s. She has been a life member of the WMS for many of those years.

Church music has always been a major

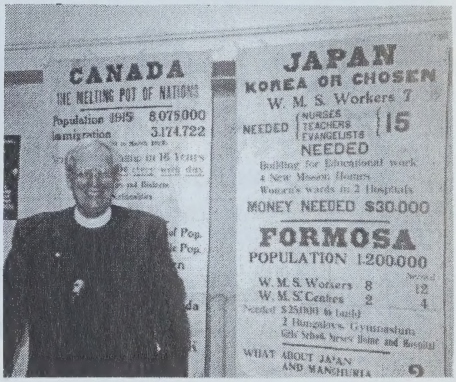
part of Lillian's life. She directed several church choirs in Saskatoon, played the piano and was a great leader in music with her beautiful voice. St. Andrew's has been blessed with her musical talent.

Even though Lillian is not always able to attend meetings, she is still vitally interested in our church and its mission.

Lillian Carpenter

Guest speaker at the **St. Andrew's, Kitchener, ON** WMS meeting on November 9, 2000 was Rev. John A. Johnston of Hamilton. John's topic was *The Church's Mission Yesterday and Today.*

John is shown in the photo , right centre, in front of wall hangings which form part of a display in the National Presbyterian Museum in Toronto. The hangings were used for publicity by the WMS in 1915 to raise money for overseas mission.



Dr. Geoffrey and Mrs. Mary-Lou Johnston were guest speakers at a recent Mission Sunday at **St. Andrew's, Welland**, and told of their mission work in Nigeria. Shown at right with the Johnstons to the left, is Rev. Ron Sharpe, minister of St. Andrew's, and Dolores MacLeod, President of the Women's Association.

At their Christmas meeting **Woodville** Presbyterian Church, Woodville, ON, honoured six dedicated women with a Certificate of Recognition: Irene Whitefield, Iola Veale, Sara McDonald, Joan Imrie, Marlene Bryan and Winnifred Currie.

Violet Russell, charter member and first President in 1941 of the Emily Gordon Auxiliary of St. Andrew's, Stratford passed away peacefully on October 5, 2000 in her 90th year.

Violet's father designed St. Andrew's sanctuary in Stratford and, as she had no siblings, the members of St. Andrew's were her "family". A member of the choir for over 50 years, Violet was special.

Vancouver Chinese Presbyterian — English WMS members completed filling

51 shoeboxes for the Samaritan's Purse...a Christmas project, which they coordinated by asking the congregation to bring gift items suitable for boys ages 5 - 12 years old. Sunday School children responded in great numbers, bringing toothpaste, stationery, small toys, etc. The women in the picture below are, left to right, Irene Bleackley, Rebecca Kee, Denise Chow, and Holly Siu — nearest the chandelier.

WMS Receives Legacy

A cheque in the amount of $12,369.36 was received in November from the estate of the late Anna G. Morrison, former member of the Danville and Sherbrooke, QB groups. Anna had been a member of the WMS for some 60 years. The cheque was forwarded through Montreal Presbyterial since Quebec Presbyterial no longer exists.

Anna Morrison was a faithful member of the Danville WMS during her working years. After her retirement she, along with her two sisters, Alene and Chris, were members of St. Andrew's, Sherbrooke. The two sisters, also deceased, left legacies to the WMS.

CIRCULATION NEWS

Katherine Allen
Circulation Manager

Has your group returned the Glad Tidings subscription list? There are still approximately 25 outstanding lists as of January 5. We will be following up on these shortly. Hopefully we will soon hear from these groups.

Included in the Fall PCPak was a copy of the Glad Tidings poster with the subscription forms on the reverse side. This packet was mailed to all ministers and others on the mailing list. The Council Executive Editorial Working Group had asked that the magazine be promoted to all congregations. The idea is to reach congregations who do not have groups, to inform people about mission and to encourage new subscribers to the magazine. Perhaps you should ask your minister if he has received this poster and post it on the bulletin board.

Promotion of the magazine does not end in November when the subscription lists are returned. People can subscribe to the Glad Tidings magazine anytime during the year. It might be helpful to read the manual that was included in the summer mailing to all Glad Tidings secretaries which explains what to do during the year with a new subscription, changes to address and so on.

Obituaries

Dr. Sue Kober, Oakville, ON has died. Dr. Kober served in Malawi in the late 1980s for The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Dr. Robert Stinson died on Saturday, January 13th, 200, Guelph, ON. Bob was a retired professor from the University of Guelph and served faithfully as a volunteer at Livingstonia in Livingstonia Synod, Malawi for one year in the late 1990s.

He returned to Malawi in January of 2000 when he learned of the desperate need for a teacher for the spring semester. Bob was an elder at Westminster-St. Paul's Church in Guelph.

Miss S. K. Singh, former principal of Helen MacDonald Memorial School, India, died December 11, 2000, at her brother's home in Isagarth where she lived in retirement. She served the school sacrificially for many years.

Audrey Prendergast, missionary to India from 1957 to the mid 60s died in California in September 2000. She started ;in Ludhiana, then went to Jobat as director of nursing services.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Jessie Arnott
St. Andrew's, Arthur, ON

Mrs. Jessie Houlton
Belmont, ON

Elizabeth (Lizzie) Grant
St. Andrew's, Bolsover, ON

Mrs. Florence Forsythe
Bolton, ON
(formerly of Glenview, Toronto, ON)

Helen Grindell
Cambridge, ON
[Helen organized the Chee-Li ("Arise, Come") for young women at Knox in 1946]

Mrs. Clara McKinnon
Mrs. Jessie Whyte
Carberry, MN

Mrs. Verna Maginnis
St. Matthew's, Ingleside, ON

Mrs. Margaret Muir
Margaret Rodger Memorial, Lachute, QB

Mrs. Velda Yuill
London, ON
(formerly of Hamilton Road-London)

Catherine Haas,
St. Andrew's, Mount Forest, ON

Mrs. Arlene (Hardie) Young
Westminster, Paisley, ON

Mrs. Isobel Murray
First, Seaforth, ON

Mrs. Vera McCannel
Burgoyne, Southampton, ON

Mrs. Isobel McQueen
Jubilee, Stayner, ON

Mrs. Anne Votour
Cheyne, Stoney Creek, ON

Violet Russell
St. Andrew's, Stratford, ON

Jean Fry
Margaret Johnston (Past President Man & NWO Synodical)
Margaret McKay

Marion Yelland
St. Andrew's, Thunder Bay, ON

Mrs. Velma Lay
Leaside, Toronto, ON

Mrs. Penny Boyd
Bonar-Parkdale, Toronto, ON

Wilda Clark
St. Andrew's-Chalmers, Uxbridge, ON

Mrs. Sallie Lambert
St. Andrew's, Watford, ON

Mabel Eldridge
St. Paul's, Wiarton, ON

Miss Ruth Sutton
West Point Grey, Vancouver, BC

Muriel Cumming
St. Paul's, Winchester, ON

Mrs. Olive McRae
Mrs. Betty Nixon
Vankleek Hill, ON

Two earthquakes. One response.

January 13, 2001, an earthquake devastated El Salvador. Thirteen days later another massive quake hit India. Tens of thousands were killed. Hundreds of thousands were left homeless. In both, PWS&D partners were there to provide food, water, medical supplies and shelter to the survivors.

With your support, we are making a difference.

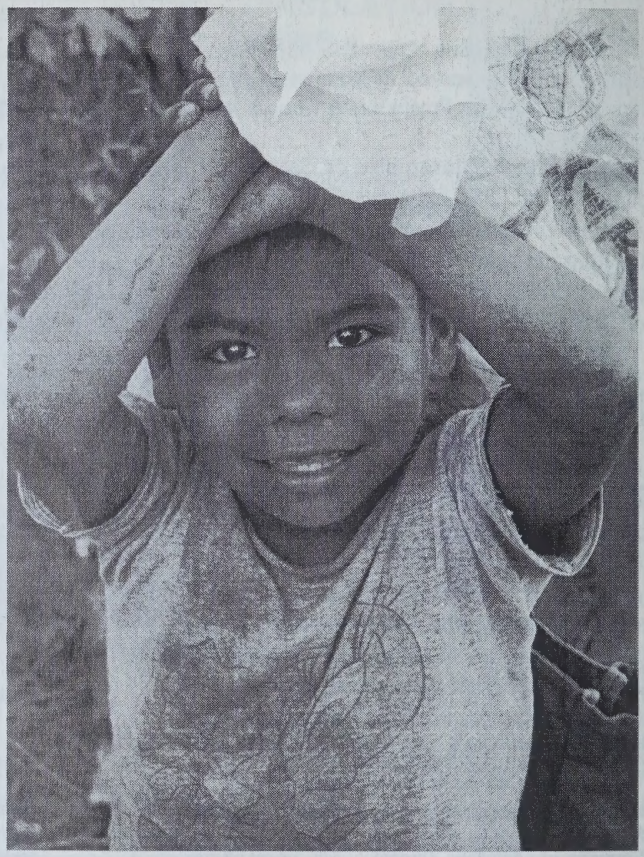


photo: ACT/David Barnhart

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Glad Tidings

May/June 2001

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I Believe... plus
Heart warming stories for summer reading and reflection.

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Cover Photo: L. June Stevenson

Glad Tidings

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GLAD TIDINGS reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

GLAD TIDINGS challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally and internationally.

GLAD TIDINGS through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired and motivated to action.

GLAD TIDINGS provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS (WD) or by the Editor.

Written in Love

L. June Stevenson, Editor

March 2001

I Believe...

Recent letters to the editor (see below) have prompted me to put my own thoughts into words. Criticism is good if it encourages growth and understanding. Controversy can help us articulate our deepest feelings and bring forward what it is we really believe. By expressing some of my feelings, along with these letters, I hope to encourage a dialogue among readers.

I believe in God the Father Almighty.... Indeed I do. *And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord.... I believe in the Holy Spirit....* Amen!

I do not believe, however, that God resembles a human father in physical appearance. Certainly not an elderly, white-bearded gentleman hovering over us above the clouds.

The God I imagine does not have the physical characteristics of a human being. My God *does* have all the positive qualities of a warm, loving parent. It is not difficult for me then to perceive masculine or feminine attributes in God.

The God I imagine is as caring and as concerned about my well being as the earthly father I remember. God is as warm and watchful as my mother was. It doesn't bother me much to hear people refer to God as Father *or* Mother. God is a metaphor for a loving parent.

Jesus called God Father, using the analogy of Father for his experience of God. There was no other available to him in his culture. Jesus taught in language that the people of his time could not only understand but accept.

You and I too have to understand God within our experience and culture.

Join Glad Tidings in a healthy dialogue. Send your thoughts to the Editor - and please make them as concise as possible so that I can include everyone's.

Readers Write

To the Editor:

I am writing because I am unhappy with Maria Stam's article written on the life of Julian of Norwich (Jul/Aug 00 Glad Tidings).

The article was very interesting but her comment (top of page 4): "God rejoices that he is our Mother" is not biblical! No where in our bible is God called a mother. God is our father. Jesus is the son.

A few years ago our church seemed to be promoting the radical feminist movement that our government was pushing. I was upset when our new Hymn Book came out promoting the same thing by changing some of our lovely old hymn's words to appease this feminist agenda. Revelations 22: 18-19 warns us what will

happen if you add to the truth of the bible's.

Yours sincerely,
Muriel Malsbury, Penhold, AB

Editor's Note: The quote at the top of page 4 to which you refer is from *Enfolding Love* by Julian of Norwich who lived in the 15th century. Some early women had "feminist" thoughts.

To the Editor (re Jan/Feb 01 Glad Tidings):
Reading the article twice about "How will you answer my daughter's questions?" by Anne Saunders, bothered me enough to respond. The little girl wants God to be called "mother". If our child came out of school and told us "1+1=3", we would say, "no dear, 1+1=2". The writer states she is not a feminist but why this question?

Yes indeed God is called the creator, shepherd, etc. but I never read "Mother". Jesus teaches us "Our father who art in Heaven" and "No one comes to the Father but through me". Yes, how often Jesus Christ mentions the "Father" or "My Father" in the Gospels. Why is it so important for us to know everything better, indeed why do we want to change God's Word? Why do we feel put down as females? God created male and female to help each other and be partners. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 11:3 "The head of every man is Christ, the head of every woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God." But does that mean we are "lower" or less loved than man? A man shall leave his mother and father and cleave to his wife and they shall be one". No questions who is "boss". What a different world it would be if we loved each other and lived like brothers and sisters. Yes, let us each try to be like a little child who trusts and believes in her or his parents, and we all pray earnestly, "Jesus Christ lead us all the way to teach little ones".

Harriet Broeze, Grand Valley, ON

To the Editor:
Before my Jan/Feb issue arrived, I had already been informed about Anne Saunders' article. After reading it, I found myself saying, "Oh inclusive, exclusive boy/girl, girl/boy!"

A number of years ago, equally disturbing articles appeared in Glad Tidings. Many angry protest letters arrived on your desk, and if other WMS groups reacted as ours did, many subscriptions must have been cancelled. Since then, the quality of GT has greatly improved, but it took a lot of coaxing before our ladies gradually began to re-subscribe. I really wouldn't blame them for doing a repeat, but there is so much good material within your pages that it would be a shame to "throw out the baby with the bath water."

The Biblical references that Anne gave, do not say what Anne and a host of others would have us believe. How well the serpent does His work! The Bible is full of illustrations where that with which we are familiar, is used to help us grasp the bigger picture. They are used to help us understand the character of God, to teach us, or help us to trust Him. Some of the references given by Anne are within that framework, but others are used in a context that manipulates God's Word. Thankfully, those who attend the Women's World Day of Prayer service in Bobcaygeon, will not be praying to "God, our Father and Mother". Do not be deceived! Warped interpretations of God's Word

.....continued on page 26

Love Is... A Violin

by Margaret Vanderzweerde

On Christmas Sunday December 24, 2000, a most incredible gift was given to the Christ child - a very old, unique and valuable violin to be used to His glory in the mission fields of India. How did this all come about? Let me tell you the story.

In the interior of Bihar, India there is a minister of Word and Sacrament in charge of six small, rural congregations. His music team consists of dancers, drummers and singers. Instruments used are indigenous and only the violin, played by the pastor, gives the melody of praise.

When we first met the pastor we noticed that his violin didn't sound quite right. No wonder. It had been damaged, patched and then painted...red. I guess you know what happened to the sound. To make matters even worse, when the strings broke he fashioned new strings from stripped electrical wire, not having access to a music store in the interior of India to buy the real thing.

Back home, in Niagara on the Lake, there lives a music teacher, violinist and harpist, Anne Marie Regehr. As church organist at St. David's Presbyterian Church, she and my husband Jake sat over refreshments one day, and talked about the mission field. Jake told her about the "broken violin".

Left to right: Jake Vanderzweerde, Daniel and Anne Marie Regehr.

The following week we received a call from Anne Marie telling us she had prayerfully come to the decision to give a violin to be taken to India. We were overjoyed, but absolutely astounded when we found out which violin.

The late Martin Chikie of Queenston, Ontario had lovingly crafted the instrument she was giving. He created over 200 fiddles in his lifetime, each unique and valuable. The violin in question was cut from a black walnut tree that stood in Pennsylvania and when Mr. Chikie began to carve the violin he found a bullet in the log which, when dated by an archivist, was said to be from 1774 - the American Revolution. The fingerboard was made from polished rosewood.

The violin had been a gift to Anne Marie from her husband, Daniel. Together they made the decision to give it.

On Christmas Sunday Anne Marie played the violin as the Offertory at Stamford Presbyterian Church in Niagara Falls. Her choices were "Be Thou my vision" and "The Crags of Tumbledown Mountain". She then proceeded to present the violin for dedication by the Rev. Laurie McKay-Deacon and passed the instrument to Jake.

When I questioned Anne Marie on her gift she said that initially she had planned to give a practice violin, a piece used by students. However, on rethinking this, she felt it should be a valuable one, one with a story, one that meant a lot to her if it was to be a worthwhile gift to be given on the occasion of Jesus' birthday. And so the gift was given.

The Lark

Every day, I listened:
Listened for him at dawn.
Every day, I listened
So I would hear his song.

A song that he could not contain,
Of joy that knew no bounds,
And overflowed in medleys
Of exquisite sound.

One day I did not hear him.
I did not hear his song.
One day I did not hear him.
My little friend was gone.

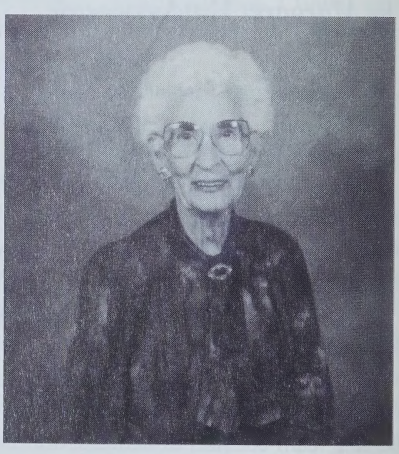
But gone is such a final word.
Perhaps he's just away.
Away for only a little while
And he'll return some day.

Frances Woodson

Gladys Nolan

- Aging Gracefully

by Maria Stam



Gladys Nolan

It is more than twelve years ago that I met Gladys Nolan at a meeting of the Canadian Authors Association in London, Ontario. Her friendly, outgoing personality and her readiness to provide valuable information influenced my decision to join the organization. Since those days I observed Gladys' ability to inspire new writers and to encourage others to keep on writing in spite of rejections and disappointments. Admired by many because of her vitality at an age when most people have given up productivity, she cheerfully continues her creative work.

Born as Gladys Taylor in Derby, England in 1908, she immigrated to Canada at the age of five. Her family settled in Schreiber, close to Thunder Bay, Ontario

where she attended elementary and high school. In 1925 she married Henry Nolan. Four years later the couple moved with their little daughter to London, Ontario. Another girl and a son were born there, and in 1943 they adopted a baby boy whose mother was unfit to look after him.

Gladys still lives in the lovely home her husband built in London nearly sixty years ago. But tragedy has not been a stranger to Gladys. She lost her husband of 51 years in 1976 and in the same year her adopted son was killed in a car accident. Her daughter Arline died of cancer in 1989.

As a young woman Gladys felt the urge to express her thoughts in writing. Her first article "Making Do" was published in *The Western Producer* in Saskatoon during the Depression. She joined the London Writer's Workshop and often contributed to a column called "Mary Hastings" published in The London Free Press. In June of 1970 Gladys and six other writers established the London Branch of the Canadian Authors Association.

During the following years she served the organization with great enthusiasm, holding responsible positions like secretary, treasurer and branch president. She showed a great interest in the successes of each member and put into action the mission of the Association "Writers Helping Writers". When the branch folded in 1995, Gladys became one of the co-founders of another local writers' group.

Her numerous articles and poems have appeared in periodicals throughout Canada and the United States. A collection of her poems under the title "Ghosts and the Garden" was published by the University of New Brunswick in 1972. In the last couple of years she sorted and collected her countless poems into four volumes.

Beyond her activities as a writer, Gladys is known as a generous hostess who likes to spoil her guests with homemade baking. As a life-long lover of children, she still plays the piano for the Sunday School of the Richard's Memorial United Church. Her door is always open to someone in need of a listening ear, a shoulder to cry on, or a roof above his/her head.

Blessed with a strong faith and positive attitude, she was able to overcome many obstacles and problems. "Life has never been easy for me, but writing kept me going," she explained. When I asked what triggered her desire to write, she answered smiling and with conviction, "Writing is part of my nature - I have to write".

Gladys adjusted to modern technology and converted from a manual typewriter to an electric one and then to a word processor. She even considers "Computers are near perfection" as she says in her poem *Reflection.* While on the other hand she admits in the same poem that she has some nostalgic feelings for the past, "I love the ticking of a clock/as it gently moves the hours/it tells of days of long ago".

Her poetry is based upon years of observations of nature and humans, and filled with the wisdom of a long, fruitful life. As a lover of nature and an enthusiastic gardener, she not only grows flowers and likes to decorate her house with them, she also praises their beauty, calling the simple pansy in her poem, *Pansy*, "A soothing benediction/uplift to my soul/are the delicate pansy blossoms/arranged in my bowl".

In another poem, *Plants,* she compares plants with people: "People too are like plants/that we must try to understand/which way they need to grow". Her poems are testimony of her love for people and God's creation. They are like good old wine that never loses its flavour for the one who appreciates its exquisite bouquet. Closing with one of her poems says more about Gladys Nolan as a person and as an outstanding example of aging gracefully than one would be able to express.

Faith, Love and Truth

Faith is calm assurance
when all hope is gone,
it will give you strength, friend
while you carry on.

Love is sharing every day
the other person's need;
the only thing that kills it
is selfishness and greed.

Truth is seeking for the right
although it's hard to find
keep these three before you
for greater peace of mind.

Gladys Nolan

- Maria Stam is a freelance writer from London, ON. She is the author of several books, numerous articles and poems.

grace

when my green hope withers in the
gathering dust
and its faintest stirrings shrivel in the
sobbing wind
when apathy invades this sluggish
spirit
and my drowsy will sinks into the soft
bed of despair
it is then You come to me
with the grace of dawn
bending me to a new beginning

You show me You are the soul of the
earth
and its very heartbeat throbs to Your
holy pulse
with mighty hands You lift me from
corrupt soil
choke out the dead root
until cultivated in the perfection of Your
light
I rise up, once again
trellised in Your goodness.

Barbara Mitchell

Genetic Engineering

"Ethics and Frankenfood"

by Fred Shaffer, Knox Teaching Assistant

Dolly the cloned sheep was without doubt the most shocking debutante in history, and the more recently coined phrase "Frankenfood" pungently expresses the bubble's concern about the sort of advanced biotechnology she represents applied to food crops. Knox College was privileged, on December 2, 2000, to host presentations by Dr. Donald Bruce, Director of the Society, Religion and Technology Project of the Church of Scotland, on the theological and ethical implications of genetic engineering in non-human species.

Human modification of plants and domestic animals - through selective breeding - is literally as old as civilization itself. The ethical question here is really how much human induced change in a creature is justifiable, and when is a line crossed which violates the integrity of the created order. Domestication itself produces types which lack many of the characteristics of wild varieties but which suit human needs.

Dogs, for example, are actually degenerate wolves and not a separate species. Inbreeding of domesticated species does produce individuals which "stretch" the created order by extreme development of genetically recessive characteristics. However, purebred varieties of crop plants such as corn, very weak and sickly plants indeed but with desired recessive genes unobscured by dominant genes, are hybridized to produce vigorous, high yielding plants tailor-made for the particular climatic conditions prevailing in almost any locale. But all such changes through selective breeding are of course limited by sexual reproduction within the bounds of the fundamental genetic parameters of the species.

Genetic engineering however, bypasses sexual reproduction altogether and resorts to splicing coded genetic material from one individual into the strands of coded genetic material of another, and it can and does cross species lines. For example, human genes alter the pigs' fundamental "piggishness" so that it becomes - what? Neither fully pig nor fully human! Dr. Frankenstein rules!

In his presentation, Dr. Bruce emphasized the church's confession that Christ is the Lord of all creation, for "all things are created in him, through him and for him" (Colossians 1:15), and "without him not one thing came into being" (John 1:3). But

the original relationship of the fallen creation to the Triune Creator God is hidden and obscure, and so creation with its orders - for example, the boundaries represented by the wolf, corn, pig and human species - cannot be properly understood apart from the revelation of the reconciliation of God and the world in Jesus Christ.

That is to say that the original orders of creation cannot stand as ethical categories apart from Jesus Christ for the simple reason that fallen humankind is incapable of rightly perceiving them. We cannot speak of a direct relationship between God and creation, but because the Son of God became human, and the stewardship of the earth with its creatures is clearly a human responsibility (Gen. 2:15), we can speak of human responsibility in Jesus Christ to the Creator for the life of the earth.

The application of Christologically-based social and political ethics which speak of responsible human participation in God's being-for-another to our relationship with non-human species must now be pursued, and here the church certainly brings a unique perspective.

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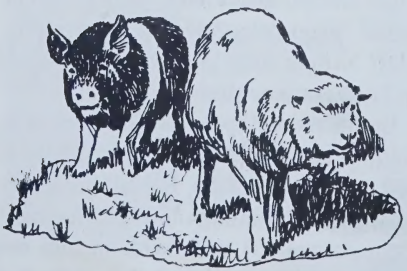


Love Song

Full fifty years have passed since that June day
When in youth's innocence we pledged our love
In this friendly church on Bala Bay
Beneath the tender gaze of God above.

Warm was the sun, and cloudless was the sky,
And we, like wide-eyed children full of trust,
Were sure our love would never, ever die.
Until our mortal bodies turned to dust.

Remember how we kissed beside the falls?
And gathered wildflowers down along the shore?
Of darker days we had no fear at all
For we were one, now and forever more.

Perhaps it's just as well we could not know
The tricks that fate would play on you and me,
Or that the tides of love must ebb and flow,
And what we wish for most, may never be.

Now hand in hand once more by Bala Bay
We stroll the lanes in sunshine and in rain,
And if you ask, "What would you do today?"
I'll answer this - "I'd marry you again."

Maryleah Otto

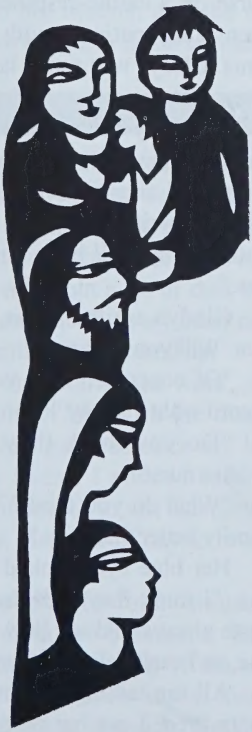
Mothers and Sons in the Old Testament

A Puzzle

by Jim Phillips

Can you match up the mothers and sons without looking up the scripture passage?

Adah	Abel (Genesis 4:1-2)
Athaliah	Ahaziah (2 Kings 8: 25-26)
Bathsheba	Dalphon (Esther 5:14; 9:7)
Bilhah	Dan (Genesis 30:6)
Elishaba	Eleazar (Exodus 6:23)
Eve	Gad (Genesis 30:11)
Gomer	Gershom (Exodus 20:2-3)
Hannah	Isaac (Genesis 21:1-3)
Jochebed	Jacob (Genesis 25:21-26)
Leah	Jezreel (Hosea 1:3-4)
Rachel	Joseph (Genesis 30:22-24)
Rebekah	Jubal (Genesis 4:20-21)
Ruth	Judah (Genesis 29:35)
Sarah	Moses (Exodus 6:20)
Tamar	Obed (Ruth 4:13-17)
Zeresh	Perez (Genesis 38:24-29)
Zilpah	Samuel (1 Samuel 1:20)
Zipporah	Solomon (11 Samuel 12:24)



Let Me Go

by Virginia Stirling

"I know that I am going to die soon," Gladys' gentle, wrinkled face smiled. "It's all right, really it is, nurse. I have no fear of death. I firmly believe it's just another stage in life. Although, it is an end, it is also a beginning of something greater than we can ever imagine."

My elderly patient was suffering from a major heart condition. She had been admitted to see if anything could be done to give her some relief from the pain and breathing difficulties she was experiencing.

Gladys was 92, which made the problem worse because the number of medications she could be given was limited. Yet I never once heard this pleasant little lady complain about anything.

On one of her better days she would insist on getting out of bed. She would sit in her chair with oxygen on, to help her breathing, busily knitting for the Mission Services.

"No one should have to be without something on their hands when it gets cold," Gladys told me. "This is my way of trying to make sure they have enough mitts to give to people who need them."

I asked her, "How many do you think you've made?"

Chuckling, she replied, "A few hundred, that's for sure. And I'm going to keep on making them for as long as I'm able!" I believed her.

Gladys' family didn't like to hear her talk about dying. The fact that they refused to listen when she wanted to discuss her funeral arrangements saddened her because it was something she wanted to do.

She and I had talked about this on several occasions, so I was aware of her feelings.

"Nurse, why can't my family accept the fact that I'm an old lady? I've lived a good long life and now I'm ready to move on."

Gladys' pale, drawn features were all indicators that she spoke the truth. As a nurse on a cardio-respiratory unit, I had seen many patients with similar symptoms. Gladys was a sick lady and we both knew that.

Sitting by her side, I took hold of her hand. "If it means so much to you to make your final arrangements, then just do it. You can write everything down and then your family will have something to follow."

Gladys smiled. "Yes, I'd like to do that. Will you help me?"

"Of course I'll help you. But only to record what you say."

"Do you think they will heed my wishes nurse?"

"What do you think? You know your family better than I do."

Her blue eyes looked thoughtfully at me. "I think they will do as I ask. They have always told me how much they love me, so I can't believe otherwise."

All the talking had made my patient extra tired. I got her resettled in bed and

promised to return after she'd rested.

It didn't take very long to get Gladys' last requests compiled. She knew exactly what she wanted.

She didn't want any visitation. Only a simple service of remembrance and no flowers. "Flowers are for the living," she emphatically put it.

Those were the last arrangements she needed to make. This dear lady seemed more relaxed once she had them written down.

Gladys suffered only for a short while longer. She remained staunch in her beliefs, never showing any fear, and eager to see what lay ahead.

After her funeral Gladys' daughter wrote to me. She thanked me for the kindness I'd shown her mother, and she enclosed the following poem that was read at Gladys' service:

When I come to the end of the road, and the sun has set for me,
I want no rites in a gloom filled room, why cry for a soul set free?
Miss me a little, but not too long, and not with your heads bowed low.
Remember the fun we once shared, miss me but let me go.
This is a journey we all must take, and each of us goes it alone;
It's all part of the Master's plan, a step on the road to home.
When you are lonely and sick at heart, go to the folks we know;
Bury your sorrow in doing good deeds, miss me but let me go.

As I read these words written by an anonymous author, I knew in my heart that Gladys was finally at peace. And so was her family.

"I"-Witness

Near the basement stairs leading to the kitchen, I was shocked to see a heavy coating of dust and fine sawdust lying in a patch of bright sunlight. That floor had been swept recently, but a lot of dust had accummulated unnoticed. Every other task went on hold until it was cleaned up.

Resuming my interrupted work, my mind saw an object lesson in the diversion. The dust had gathered since my last cleaning. Why hadn't I noticed before? Was the sunlight needed in just that particular way, and at that time of day to reveal it?

I could have left it for future cleaning. After all, it was in the basement. Who would see it there, especially if the sun wasn't shining? But I knew it was there, and needed immediate attention. Besides, I had to live with myself.

This reminded me of the many times when something I heard or read made me see, with a jolt, that there were ways or attitudes in me, unrecognized, that were displeasing to my Lord. The words that convicted me each time were not new. In fact, they were very familiar, but they took on a relevant meaning not known before. The sin may not have been apparent to others, but now I knew it. Even if I could get away with hiding it from others, it had to be dealt with and forgiven if I was to know peace.

Life today is such that we cannot afford to neglect God's word and looking to God in all our affairs. God's word is the Light which will show if dust is collecting. We can choose to live in that light and stay "dust-free"!

Jean Abrams, Cobourg ON

A Reflection on Ephesians 4:1-7

by Dennis A. Smith

(PCUSA, working in Guatemala)

...lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit...

Life in Guatemala is not so different from life in the U.S. [and Canada]. People hurt the same; people hope the same. Kids in our part of the world are trying to figure out the meaning of life, just like here. Average folks are trying to figure out how to make ends meet, how to deal with unexpected pain.

So Paul's words to the Ephesians are not just poetry. To say we share one Lord, one faith, one baptism is to say we are precisely the same before God: Guatemalans and gringos equally in need of Jesus, equally gifted in grace.

Here are three challenges we face together as God's people:

First, we are called to be a community of hope. My wife, Maribel, is a Roman Catholic. She began to work in her neighborhood as a pastoral agent when she was about 16. In her pastoral work, Mari developed the gift of listening. She allowed herself to be challenged and enriched by the lives of her neighbors.

Her neighborhood, San Martin, was even poorer back then. There were six Protestant churches, but no Catholic chapel in the community. Twice, the community had named committees to raise funds to build a church. Twice, the committee presidents, middle-aged men, had absconded with the funds and materials.

The third time they elected Maribel as president. She was 18. They built that church from scratch. By hand. In the process they learned that they could be a community of hope We were married in that church.

Hope is the understanding that in Christ, alternatives are possible. When I, as an individual, don't have the strength to change that which is destroying me inside, God's grace is sufficient. And God's people are my strength and solace.

Secondly, we are called to be a prophetic community. In the Old Testament, the prophets are not crystal-ball gazers. Rather, their skill is in discerning God's voice and presence in their midst.

I grew up in a mission-minded church. As a young person I had numerous opportunities to do mission. Then, in college, I

Forgiveness is Christ's gift to you. It is wholly undeserved, but wholly real.

spent two months working at a Christian radio station in Seoul, South Korea. In each of those experiences I discovered that God, sometimes, is more present outside than inside church buildings. And that sometimes, people hide in church when they should be listening for God's still, small voice in surprising places.

Where are people most in need? That is where God calls you to be.

I also discovered that poverty and oppression are never God's will. As I studied the Bible with Korean university students, they said that God would energize them to bring down a military dictatorship and build a democracy. That was in 1971. And they did.

A decade later, as I studied the Bible with Guatemalan peasants, living in the midst of war, I watched and listened and prayed as they imagined new possibilities for their nation: no more impunity, no more violence, the rule of law. Step by step, that new future is being built.

Third, we are called to be a forgiving community. Forgiveness is Christ's gift to you. It is wholly undeserved, but wholly real.

One of my jobs is to keep track of the media and try to understand their impact in our lives. If you watch carefully you can find justice, loyalty and solidarity in the media. But frequently the media proclaim that brutality, ruthlessness and betrayal are the tickets to success.

These media images only reflect what we experience day by day at work, at school, and in all too many homes.

Such a stark diet leaves us hollow, damaged. Many people have become embittered, withdrawn. Others say the best defense is a good offense and have come to glory in aggression.

This is the world in which we live today: people are hurting. People are longing to hope.

Christ's forgiveness can be a never-ending wellspring of tenderness within us. Having been forgiven frees us to forgive. Having been forgiven frees us to serve.

Prayer

The promise: Your pain will not overwhelm you.

The prayer: Gentle Lord, help me to remember that you will never, "break the crushed reed, nor quench the wavering flame"*. In that certainty fill me with the strength and the desire to rise again, and to go forward knowing that it is you who will walk with me and sustain me always.

I ask this in Jesus' holy name. Amen

Roberta G. McLelland

*Isaiah 42:3

Roberta G. McClelland is a religion writer from London, ON who has been published in Christian magazines throughout Canada and the United States.

A Road Less Traveled

by Joyce Y. Buckingham

My daughter Linda and I had been searching for a church in which to lay to rest a loved one: husband, father, teacher and friend. We were not a religious family yet we knew instinctively that we needed to show our love and respect.

"There must be trees, Mom", my daughter said, her arm linked through mine.

"Because of the bird," I whispered, remembering how my late husband had assured me he would be there whenever a lone bird landed nearby.

After visiting some churches we drove slowly along a narrow road, curious as to where it might lead. And there it stood, a little country church. As we walked slowly across the grass, we both knew.

"Oh, Mom, it's perfect!" Linda said. And so our loved one was buried in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in South Lancaster among his birds and trees.

Shortly after I moved from Ottawa to Lancaster, I attended the church. And I waited, wanting so much for that bird to land by my feet.

This change in my direction brought me into contact with country folk. I was made so welcome and began enjoying immensely the fellowship, trips to local farms and church events.

One Sunday as I listened attentively to the minister preach a sermon that seemed tailor-made for me, I knew that I wanted to belong to St. Andrew's. This church had done so much for me. It had made me a part of a community and bestowed upon me a precious commodity, friends. Doors were opened, for me to rest my body, my soul and my broken heart.

I became a Presbyterian in June 1998. I was very happy that day, sensing acutely that my elusive little bird could be found in so many other ways - in a smile, a warm handshake, a special look of understanding from those who had also traveled that road that looked as if it led no where.

Country villages harbour friendships of a lifetime, something I enjoyed watching. Being from another country I had left my school friends behind. I made a big leap of faith that day and it has taught me so much, not the least of which is the pleasure of living in a small village. Throughout my life I have dared to venture far afield, to take that road less traveled.

I am a member of a small church. I read the Bible and try to understand what happened 2,000 years ago. A close friend and I spend many challenging hours reading and discussing religion, and my frequent falls from grace. These happy 'moments' are now an important part of each day. Am I a Christian? You decide.

The Cliff Hanger

by Joyce McNeil

I have a secret garden in my back yard surrounded by a picket fence. No one can see me when they pass by as I am hidden behind red and yellow dogwood, bridal wreath, lilac bushes and a huge golden elder bush.

This is where I sing with the songbirds, talk to my flowers and imagine I am like one of the swallows, very special, sitting alone on a rickety bench. Although I will gladly share my outer gardens, I keep this private world for myself.

My thoughts are usually like a gentle soft breeze on a warm summer's day, but on this particular day I heard in the distance a cry for help. The cry came from the beach about 250 feet away. I smiled as I recalled the dramatic play acting I used to do when I was a child. Kids fooling around I thought. Still I listened intently. There seemed to be only one voice. Perhaps I should investigate. It could be someone in trouble.

The cliffs in Margaretville, Nova Scotia, where I live on the Bay of Fundy range from ten to fifty feet high. This cliff from where I heard the cry for help has around a 30-foot drop to the beach.

Halfway down on the cliff an eighty-five-year-old man was lying on his back with a lawn mower resting on the top of his head. He was holding on to a broken part of a fence railing that had crumbled with him when the softer part of the land gave way under his weight. His elderly wife was standing helplessly at the open door of their summer cottage.

I gasped in shock, yelled to the woman and ran back across the street to my house, calling over my shoulder as I ran. "Stop the first car that comes along. I will go for help!"

We never know how we will react in a crisis. I called a friend, not knowing what else to do, and screamed into the phone. "Get help. A man has fallen over the cliff." Then I ran back to the poor old man and told him help was on the way.

Fortunately my friend's husband, a fireman, was home and arrived on the scene moments later; followed by a fire truck and four able-bodied members of the local volunteer fire department. Those moments while we waited seemed more like hours. I was afraid the elderly man's thin arms might weaken as he held on to the broken fence lodged on some rocks, and fall to a tragic end on huge boulders 20 feet below.

Two of the men secured heavy ropes around the trunk of a tree and held on to the other end as they dropped to the beach. The other two men on the cliff carefully climbed down far enough to reach the handle of the lawnmower. Another rope was then tied around our cliffhanger as they gently raised the man back to firmer ground.

Not a word was spoken. The men worked in silence as though rescuing someone from a cliff was an everyday occurrence. Later I asked the man why he did

not speak to me when I had arrived on the scene. It would have made me feel much better if had known he was still conscious.

"Why should I?" this fine Christian gentleman replied. "I knew you had gone for help. I had to hold on with what strength I had left in my arms."

He was right. He had the wisdom of an older man and the faith of a little child. After the firemen checked for broken bones and the man refused to go to the hospital, they carried him to a couch inside the cottage and left me in charge. A large gash on the top of his head from the lawnmower was bleeding profusely. His wife, near hysterics, asked me to wash the open wound and apply first aid from the medicine cabinet.

"It's just a little cut. It will heal," he assured me while I dabbed gingerly at the wound. I asked if he had some brandy in the house to settle his nerves. "Never touch it," he said. "Don't need it."

After I knew the couple would be all right, I went back to my secret garden. I knelt down by my bench and gave thanks while I questioned and wondered. "How did everything fall into place so easily?" No one had time to think; yet everyone remained extremely calm. Of course! I decided His eye was on the sparrow, and this time it wasn't just on me. He had gathered us all under His wings.

Although I still do not wish to share my secret garden, I do need to share the blessings of a miracle.

Losing Mama

She has wanted to speak for a long time now
but her lips are a broken hinge unevenly hung
and illness has strapped her tongue
to the roof of her mouth
when I call her name
she turns inward
enters herself through the back of her mind
to pace the empty corridors of her bones

struggling behind the frenzied spasm of outstretched arms
she forges through 80 age-glossed years
as she seeks clarity in the thin light
leaking through her eyes
knee-deep in memory
she stoops to lift the edge of each new day
searching for a way
to bring herself
back to me

Barbara Mitchell

Sniffy: The Kissing Llama

by Gail Northgrave

A llama once kissed me. No fooling. My husband and I were visiting friends who own Wilderways, a ranch that hosts over 100 emus, a number of wallabies, ostriches and llamas.

We trailed behind Jerry, the owner, to get a close look at his uncommon farm critters. As we entered the llama corral, 'Sniffy' exhibited his "Who is this?" routine and trotted up to us.

"Just stay still. He won't hurt you," cautioned Jerry. "He just wants to sniff you."

Well, he gave Frank a good sniffing and then I saw these big fuzzy lips and nostrils heading for me. I closed my eyes. A mixture of childish delight and fear arose as I felt this animal's breath and lips on my neck, my face, my ears. It tickled. I giggled but remained still. Finally, he had enough of me. His curiosity appeased, he walked away.

Whenever I recall my llama experience, I laugh. In some aspects, the llama reminded me of my own curiosity, my need to experience life's activities. Rarely do I find myself bored. Instead, every once in a while my body rebels and I find myself going to bed around 9 p.m.

Undoubtedly, I was curious as a child. However, somewhere along life's travels I lost my natural sense of wonder. One morning after the children had left for school and the necessary chores were completed, I felt very bored and empty. I recalled someone saying, "Whenever I am down, I just open my Bible at random, read what my eyes light upon and believe it holds a message for me."

"Well," I thought to myself. "Sounds a little weird, but what have I got to lose?"

I opened the Bible at Job 38-39, and read. In those passages, God is questioning Job about the world and the animals He created.

Since Gail didn't have a photo of herself and Sniffy, I took the liberty of subsituting one of myself with "Sammy, the kissing camel", taken at Jaffa, Palestine. - L. June Stevenson Editor

> *Do not, I repeat, do not believe that curiosity killed the cat. Curiosity never killed anyone.*

"What has this to do with me feeling bored?" I asked myself.

Instantly that thought was replaced with another thought, "Get interested in life." Was that God speaking?

Acting as if it was God's voice I heard, I enrolled in a one-day bird watching course. Next, I took a course on wild flowers and edible plants. I joined a hiking club and began purchasing nature books. Boredom scurried away as I hiked trails and admired the variety of flowers and birds.

I have heard it said that, "curiosity killed the cat". Do not, I repeat, do not believe it. Curiosity never killed anyone. Indifference, rigidity and apathy to the wonders of our world murder one's spirit. Curiosity brings excitement, newness, knowledge and valuable life lessons.

In his poem, "Thieving Time", Mark Antony De Wolfe Howe wrote, "Now thieving Time, take what you must - Yet leave, O leave exempt from plunder my curiosity, my wonder!"

Consequently, whenever I am tempted to settle for Dullsville, I remember my lesson from Job, and Sniffy.

Eight Days in the Holy Land

by Elizabeth Symon

From reading news reports in the papers we wondered how safe it would be to visit Israel. Would we become more confirmed in our faith than when we left Canada, or be just jet-setting tourists on another trip overseas?

We chose a guided coach tour, scheduled for eight unforgettable days, to explore this land of the Bible. We flew from Vancouver to London, England, and then on to the Middle East.

When we landed at dawn at Tel Aviv's airport there was no one to greet us, so a taxi sped us to an ultra modern high-rise hotel in Jerusalem. Here we discovered there was 'no room at the inn' in which we were supposed to be booked! Reception did not recognize the name of our tour. It was suggested that we wait in the lobby until 3:00 p.m. when guest accommodation might be available. Many phone calls by them, and much protesting by us, eventually unlocked a door.

The following day brought a courier, a vehicle, and a discovery: we were the only two tourists for 'Holy Land Highlights'. We were driven in a minivan to the oldest parts of Jerusalem, with its mellowed stone buildings and city walls. The van was parked and we set off at a jogging pace to keep up with the courier. We threaded our way through the souk, or

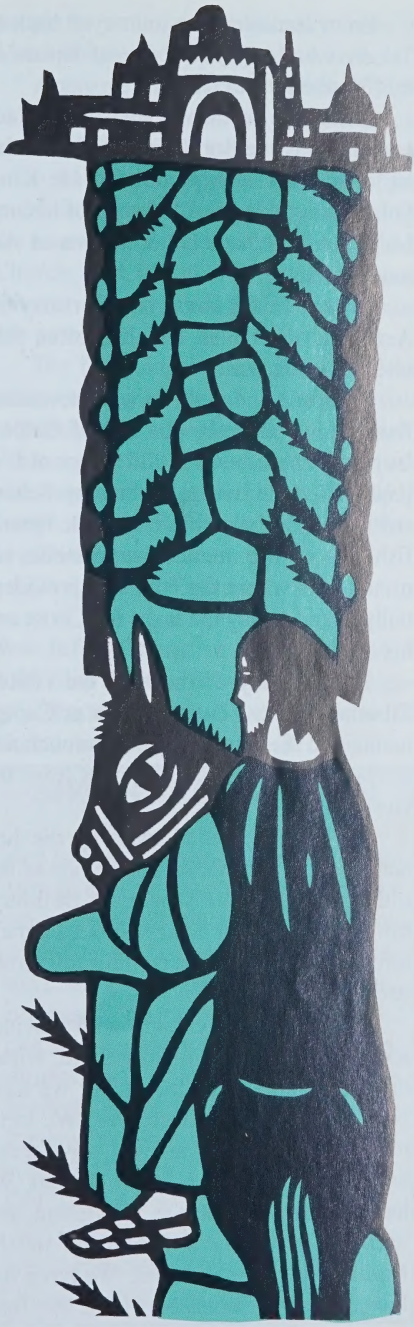
covered bazaar, with its ancient dark passageways, and came out on the Via Dolorosa, leading to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, said to be the site of Christ's crucifixion and burial, and from there to the Western Wall, part of King Solomon's Temple, still standing today.

There were people everywhere: shoppers, businessmen, tourists, pilgrims, priests and nuns, and on the narrow streets, luxury cars, taxis, tour buses, and now and then a heavily laden donkey trotting by.

Then we were driven to the 'little town of Bethlehem' and found the inevitable crowd waiting to view the site of Christ's nativity. Our guide cried, "Follow me!", leading us down the worn stone steps to the crypt, and the impressive many-pointed star which marks the spot where the humble manger once stood. (Strange, I thought, in Christmas card scenes, the star is always above the stable where Christ was born!)

"Tomorrow," announced the courier, "we'll see modern Jerusalem." It was a full day's outing: tree planting, the Knesset (Parliament building), museums, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the crystal labyrinth of the memorial to the Jewish children who perished in the Holocaust, this century's Holy Innocents, victims of this century's Herod, whose name was Hitler.

The next day we drove past Bedouin encampments in the desert. TV antennae sprouted from the tents which they shared with camels and goats. We made a stop at the Dead Sea. Here there were no ships or boats, no birds, no fish, no sigh of life except for the unsinkable tourists. We rode the cable car to the mountain stronghold of Masad, symbol of Hebrew independence from ancient times.



From Jerusalem we journeyed back to Tel Aviv and enjoyed a day of leisure in this Mediterranean resort.

Traveling north, we stopped at Caesarea to view the Roman amphitheater and aqueduct, and at Megiddo, to see King Solomon's stables and 20 layers of history. Megiddo is perhaps better known as Armageddon.

On to Haifa, the Crusader city of Acre, and the Golan Heights, often featured on newscasts.

We spent one night in a whitewashed flat-roofed cottage by the Sea of Galilee. In might have been 2,000 years old. It looked like the houses in Sunday School stories of Christ's childhood. St. Peter's fish was on the menu at suppertime, reminding us where the coin was providentially found to pay the taxes for Christ and his disciples.

The last day of the tour we visited Tiberias, and St. Peter's home at Capernaum, and the Church of the Annunciation at Nazareth, places well known from the Gospels.

We then proceeded south by the Jordan River to Jericho, said to be one of the oldest cities in the world; to Bethany, home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus, through Jerusalem, and coming full circle, back to Tel Aviv.

We left the Holy Land with kaleidoscopic memories. The Holy Land, where the Bible came alive for us, for we have been to the land it describes. We have touched the bark of ancient olive trees, and dipped our hands in the Jordan. We have knelt by the star in Bethlehem, and walked in Christ's footsteps in the Nazareth of his childhood. We have followed them to Jerusalem, from the Temple to the Via Dolorosa, and the site of the crucifixion.

As we had few photo mementos of our journey in the Holy Land, we bought a video cassette in the Bible Shop on our return home, *Where Jesus Walked.* The description of the cover read:

'Jesus' life takes on a deeper spiritual meaning for those who see the sacred places which witnessed his teachings, miracles, passion, death, resurrection and ascension.'

For us, it seemed particularly appropriate.

Thought for the Day
Compiled by Eve Stickland

I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Quote/Unquote p 186. Compiled by Lloyd Cory 1977.

NEWS FLASH!!

Editor June Stevenson was at the Associated Church Press Convention in Minneapolis recently. A story by Roberta G. McClelland *"Ouch!" A Child's Good Friday Faith*, March/April 2000 was given an "Award of Excellence" (first place) in the Devotional/Inspirational category.

Of the piece the judge said, "This is wonderful use of a true and simple story to make several profound points that could not be better articulated in any sermon. A very evocative treatment of how jaded even faithful adults can become, and how they can be shocked out of their complacency by the inituitve and spontaneous act of a child."

See page 15 of this issue for one of Roberta's prayers.

Forward in Faith

In carrying out their Christian service within the Society, the members of the Finance Working Group met prior to the Council Executive meeting in mid-February. They considered requests for financial assistance from across Canada and overseas. An amount of just over $14,000 was approved.

Ten grants of $200 each were approved for young people from Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Northern Ontario and Quebec, seeking assistance to attend the Youth Triennium in July. An additional $2000 was approved from the new Youth Conference Fund to assist an additional ten young people.

A grant of $393 was approved to enable a member of one of our congregations in British Columbia to undertake a parish nursing course. $2500 was approved for a bright twelve-year-old girl in Nigeria who has osteomyelitis and must undergo further surgery. She progressed considerably after two earlier operations assisted by the Society, but a further operation is necessary.

A grant of $1000 was approved toward the expenses of the Ontario tour by the Male Choir of the Hungarian Reformed Seminary in Romania, led by our missionary, Brian Johnston. An amount of $1000 was approved to provide a French version of the Celebrate Committee video, "A Glimpse at the Family Album".

One thousand dollars was granted to assist St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Kamloops, with their Summer Reading Camp for children. Two grants, totaling $900 were approved to assist two young people to undertake missionary tours to Mozambique and Malawi, and Mexico.

Approval was given to a grant of $500 to a young woman studying for her Bachelor of Religious Education degree. Another $1000 was approved for the fifth and final Roundtable Project sponsored by the International Affairs Committee of our Church, and $2000 was granted toward the cost of a Regional Staff meeting later this year.

The foregoing is an indication of the variety of ways in which the WMS assists members and adherents of our Church. We are grateful that we can help to provide these varied experiences which equip many of the participants for more effective Christian service.

Giollo Kelly, Treasurer

New Information: re page 46 Mar/Apr 2001 Glad Tidings "WMS Receives Legacy": The total received from the estate of the late Anna G. Morrison is $16,366.09.

SHOES FROM HEAVEN

Are you looking for ideas in teaching Bible truths to children or young teens? This 86-page book of Bible-based stories, visuals, surprise features, musical items, contests, puzzles, etc. will be of great assistance to you. Also included are valuable tips for the teacher. Send $4.95 plus $1.60 for mailing to Rev. W. H. Moody, 413 - 3097 Palmer Drive, Burllington, ON L7M 4G8.

Please mention where you saw this ad.

Program

Margaret Robertson
Program Secretary

Need to Make Changes?

If the time has come to make changes in the structure of your group, presbyterial or synodical, the following may prove to be helpful.

First, make a copy of the questions for each participating member. Ask them to answer the 'A' questions individually. Then talk about the answers in groups of three of four people. Next list your responses on a flip chart/chalkboard/overhead sheet. Discuss the answers as a whole group.

A. What do you look for in your connection with WMS? Mark each one by indicating: Most important; Important; Not important.

1. Meaningful worship
2. Learning about the mission of the Church of Jesus Christ
3. Fellowship with other Christians
4. A chance to serve within the congregation
5. The feeling of being accepted
6. A way of serving in the community
7. An opportunity to learn about our missionaries
8. Other…

B. Basic Questions

These questions can take your discussion farther. Again copy the questions for each participant.

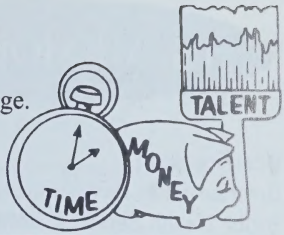
Follow the same steps as before. Answer questions individually. Discuss in small group. Discuss with whole group. Record the answers for all to see.

1. Why should we have local group/presbyterial/synodical?
2. Why do you go to the meetings?
3. How do you feel when you leave?
4. How do you invite new people?
5. What are you asking them to come to or to do?
6. What energizes you as an individual? as a group?

7. What structure do you need to accomplish these things?

Question seven is the place to make specific plans for change.

An additional question at the end could be:
8. What did you learn from doing this exercise?



Did You Know? that the **Christian Literature Fund** of the Women's Missionary Society provides funds for books, Bibles and other Christian literature for organizations in many parts of the world.

Recently a grant was given to purchase books for a little library operating out of the home of Rev. Peikang, a dentist, and Ellen Dai who work in Hongzei county, one of the poorest parts of northern Jiangsu province. People come from a great distance, children too, because there is no local library. This book centre is especially useful for teaching elders and lay people.

Can You Beat This?

In our summer 2000 mailing to Glad Tidings secretaries, we sent out a challenge. Using the words "Glad Tidings", how many smaller words can you make in ten minutes? The person who gave us the idea, Edith Reading of Oshawa, ON, got 95 words.

Burrell Dick writes from Renfrew, Ontario that they used it at their meeting. Following that she heard from Rev. Patricia Elford that she tried it and made 154 words out of Glad Tidings! Can you beat that?

Try it at your group. Try it by yourself. If you can beat that, send us the list of words.

Seniors on the Go

Norma Tomlinson sent in some great recipes - easy to use, but tasty. Share your kitchen secrets with our readers. Keep this column going with ideas and recipes for busy people!

IN MEMORIAM

Photo: W.N.Stevenson

Beatrice Scott

Beatrice Scott

Beatrice Scott died suddenly at the Grey Bruce Health Services, Southampton, Ontario on Thursday March 1, 2001 in her 94th year. Retired missionary of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, Beatrice lived in Port Elgin.

Bea will be sadly missed by her sister Jean M. Scott, nieces and nephews, Alan Scott and his wife Dianne of Toronto, Marilyn Scott of Port Elgin, Margaret and her husband Garth Hunt of Campbellville and John Scott and his wife Josie of Pakenham, Ontario. She was predeceased by her brothers Robert and Fraser.

The funeral was held in Tolmie Presbyterian Church, with Rev. Julia Morden officiating.

Bea Scott was born in Saugeen Township, Ontario, and retired to that area. Bea was a long time elder of Tolmie Church, Past Clerk of Session, Past President of the WMS group, and an active leader of Bible Study groups, and much more. Beatrice also served on Council Executive in the 1980s.

Beatrice Scott was appointed to India by the Women's Missionary Society in 1940. She worked mainly in education including a period of service in the Helen Macdonald School in Jhansi. She was Principal of the Amkhut School and Director of Village Schools. When the time came for Bhil leadership to take charge, it was Bea Scott who gave them the knowledge and encouragement they needed. Friend and colleague, Agnes Hislop says, "Her service in India endeared her to all - Canadian and Indian co-workers. She was responsible for foundations laid in many lives called to service for our Lord."

Reader's Write continued...

blatantly appear, make headlines, then seem to recede for awhile. They disappear only to gather more ammunition. Then, as we have ample evidence of in our time, they come back with more momentum and power.

Why do we doggedly keep trying to conform God to our image? There is no mistaking His gender. He can comfort us like a mother when he chooses, but He does it because he is God, the Father. He hates sin, but loves the sinner. Whoever thinks that God is a "warm fuzzy" only, should read the Book of Revelation.

If Anne is to follow the Biblical admonition to train up her child in the way that she should go, so that when she is old she will not depart from it, then she'd better clear up some misconceptions very quickly, before it is too late!

Anne, let us look briefly at a few other worms in the popular can, but the welfare of her child caused me the most concern. Let us all be aware that Babylonianism is still alive...and sick!

Marcia Whyte,
Knox Church, Bobcaygeon, ON

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Social Issues

Canada received strong criticism from the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1998, claiming that Canada failed to implement policies for its poor over the previous five years and "exacerbated poverty and homelessness among vulnerable groups during a time of increasing affluence." The homeless bracing themselves for that winter, were no doubt relieved when they heard the federal government respond, that the UN charges were based on outdated data. Here are three must-reads for any Canadian who cares about the kind of society we are creating.

On the Street: How We Created the Homeless by Barbara Murphy, J. Gordon Shillingford Publishing G7861 $19.95

Barbara Murphy is a social policy consultant in the public and private sectors in Ottawa. In this book she examines how government policies on affordable housing and on the mentally ill, along with building and housing trends have converged to leave thousands homeless. In a clear and comprehensive manner, not given to sentimentality, both problems and possible solutions are presented.

The Ugly Canadian: The Rise and Fall of a Caring Society by Barbara Murphy, J. Gordon Shillingford Publishing Inc. G7862 $17.95

The growth of social conscience in Canada and its subsequent decline has been one of the major trends in the last one hundred years. Barbara Murphy follows how we grew into caring citizens, a "kinder gentler" society following the shock of the Great Depression, to tougher and harsher public attitudes in the 1990s. By examining changes in public values and tracking social legislation we can see that it is not the politicians that are to blame for the decline of Canada's once renowned social programs, but Canadians themselves.

Out in the Open: Life On the Street, Photographs by Bob Ballantyne, Northstone Publishing G5065 $21.25

Offered as a gift, a challenge and an opportunity to know the people who live on the street, this was photographed by a street person and written by his friends. Often we wonder why choices are made not to use any means to get off the street. We are challenged to look beyond our assumptions and myths that surround poverty and to use these pictures and prose to look into the souls of these people.

Naomi's Daughters: Bridging the Generations by Alyson C. Huntly, United Church Publishing House G7921 $22.75

Times are changing and what once worked as structures for women working together are not ones that can carry us into the twenty-first century. The underlying issues that we struggle with are the focus of this book, as women attempt to relate across the generations. While it was written for and about United Church women's groups, the strategies and success stories are relevant to all church leaders. An invaluable resource, along with theory, there are workshop formats for evening study or weekend retreats, with original worship and bible studies.

Teacher Appreciation
Meditations to Make Teachers Smile by Lisa Flinn, Illustrated by John McPherson, Dimensions Press G7969 $13.95

Quiet Times With Jesus: 52 Devotions for Teachers by Jacqueline L. Loontjer, Concordia Publishing House $18.50 G1111
Two gift recommendations to show appreciation for the care and extra efforts teachers make to encourage our children to learn and excel. Also a great resource for church or school libraries.

Lamentations of the Father by Ian Frazier, Illustrated by Bruce Zick, Westminster John Knox Press G7801 $14.75
This colorful, humorous little gift book improvises from the language of Deuteronomy to give a father's code of conduct to young children. "Do not scream; for it is as if you scream all the time. If you are given a plate on which two foods you do not wish to touch each other are touching each other, your voice rises up even to the ceiling while you point to the offense with the finger of your right hand; but I say to you scream not, only remonstrate gently with the server." Ideal for Father's Day.

J. Philip Newell, The Book of Creation: An introduction to Celtic Spirituality
Celtic spirituality informs us that God uses two books to communicate with his people, the Bible and the Book of Creation. Western Christianity has a tendency to neglect the latter. Philip Newell's book is an attempt to remedy this. He uses the six days of Creation and the seventh day of rest as a unique framework to introduce the Celtic form of Christianity.

Celtic spirituality does not read the story of creation in Genesis as "a chronological account of the making of the earth." (3) Rather, it understands this account as "a theophany or manifestation of God" (xxiv). The seven days show how God reveals himself through the natural world.

The author explores God's self-revelation in seven short chapters. He links the various aspects of this revelation to the specific act of creation for each day. Each chapter ends with suggestions for meditation and prayer, linking the Celtic love for Scripture to the Celtic awareness of nature as God's other book.

This is a wonderful book for anyone interested in Celtic spirituality or for anyone looking for a tool for personal devotion. It makes a great gift and I recommend it whole-heartedly.

In Quiet Light: Poems on Vermeer's Women by Marilyn Chandler McEntyre. Eerdman's. G8056 $31.99

This a book of lushness: Vermeer's paintings reveal a luminous exterior light and McEntyre's poems communicate a compelling interior life. "These women are appreciated," she lovingly states in the Introduction. Indeed, we come to appreciate both light from the inside out and from the outside in.

As McEntyre studies the details of these paintings, she reflects, explores and "paints" in glowing verse an intimate portrait of each woman. Often Vermeer's paintings feature light flooded windows and from the face, dress, and work of each woman, we envision "an environment rich with unspoken feeling".

One of my favourites is *Woman in Blue*. The woman clutches a letter "in the light as a jeweller holds a diamond to the sun" just as her body holds another human being within. Will the child arrive before her ship-travelling merchant husband? Both symbolically will come home through waterways. Subsequently, he might bring her pearls; she might present him with a son.

Another "epistle" poem begins with a panoply of colour: "Afternoon light falls on ochres and reds and pale golds". Since mention is made of "an absent husband", and the painting shows a young woman rereading a wrinkled page, I disagree with the "girl" in the title, *Girl Reading a Letter at an Open Window*.

Perhaps the letter is from the young woman's mother who wonders "whether in her grand house, among her servants and soft garments, she still cares for news from home". We could speculate she is homesick, for this woman with her "coiffed head" dreams of gathering her skirt and wading in a muddy brook with a giggling friend. Like a matching bookend, the poem concludes with the "heat and falling light light of the afternoon". In the first and last lines, soft-syllable words are repeated resonating a bittersweetness, and this reviewer felt a tenderness toward the isolated young woman.

References to the Biblical Mary and Martha are clear in *Young Woman with a Water Pitcher*. As the veiled woman momentarily stands by an open window, her hand on the golden pitcher, she forsakes "her worldly tasks to choose the better part - to pray". As Mary 'unbusy-ied' herself to listen to Christ, so Vermeer's radiant young woman pauses to drink and that illumines her. McEntyre's play on words, drink and light, points to metaphors of Christ being the light of the world, and living water.

Because I saw in the following poem a scene which could be turned into a contemporary skit, I found myself thoroughly enjoying *Officer and Laughing Girl*, which could occur in any coffee house or lounge. The young woman in this poem appears wise beyond her years. The soldier thinks he's 'hot', with his bravado tales of travelling the world. Vermeer's light is aptly captured in McEntyre's line, "light cradles her like a lover's hand". Plainly, the young woman is amused by the soldier, but she possesses deep pleasure drawn from a source he cannot know; her contentment is beyond his understanding.

The coupling of paintings and poetry, of light and lines renders a wondrous book. So I recommend you do not buy one copy but two. Give the other to a person who values the sacredness of luminosity.

MISSION IN ACTION

Lillian Sparling
Malawi

Excerpt from an email:

February 2001 - I got up really early this a.m. and caught the mini-bus to Mzuzu at 6:30 a.m. and arrived at 8:30. There were only a few people on the bus and the driver let me sit in the front seat. It soon was packed to the gills and then some. Travel by bus here is an adventure - one person gets off at a stop and five more, plus all their belongings, and maybe a baby or two on their backs, get on. Everybody just moves over.

The road from Bandawe to Nkata Bay is good, from NBay to Mzuzu the road is full of craters, not just potholes, but craters. Drivers weave from one side of the road to the other to avoid them. Two hills in the road have been completely demolished - big trucks and buses mire down in the clay and often cannot get up these hills.

Today things were okay and the driver was a good driver but very fast - he literally flew around the curves in the road when it was good, but was very careful when the road was bad. I drive the truck to the nearest town, Chintheche, but haven't ventured this far yet. It's really a lot cheaper to take the bus and a lot more fun.

School started this last week on the 31st and this has been the first full week of classes. The Form 3s have not returned as yet because the exam results for Form 2 are not yet out. No one seems too concerned though - they will start eventually.

Best wishes,

Lillian Sparling

Lillian Sparling is teaching at Bandawe Girls Secondary School, Bandawe, Malawi.

Joy Randall
Taiwan

March 2001 - Thinking of you especially at this Lent Season and as we prepare for the celebration of Easter. May we continue to remember God's love for us in His Son who died on the cross, but rejoice in our great hope in His Resurrection.

I had a most wonderful time in Australia over Christmas and New Years with the Coles (previous Hospice doctor and family), a couple of Taiwanese friends and another former missionary to Taiwan.

Chinese New Years came shortly after... It was good to see everyone at church on New Years Day and our young people who are now off to University took part in the service with song and witness. Many are studying music and two are in theology. It was a great witness to their Christian experiences and how it has prepared them for where they are today. Pray God will continue to work in and through their lives.

Marjorie Ross was here in January for

a special forum with the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan. Now Wilma Welsh is here to help with the 100th Anniversary celebrations of Dr MacKay's death. There will be torch lighting at Oxford College and around the areas where MacKay worked. A group from Woodstock, Ontario, with bagpipers and people who do "tug-of-war" will be here March 8-16. The special celebration will be March 10th at his gravesite and a new commemorative plaque will be unveiled.

Had a good two weeks with Wilma here and attended some of the celebrations. Many of us felt it was a subtle way for evangelism to the community. Even some of the group from Woodstock were touched by the outreach and celebration of MacKay and mission here - so they are planning to make some changes in their lives.

It is also the 50th Anniversary of the General Assembly. Even though the PCT is over 135 years, until 50 years ago there were the North and South Synods. Many previous moderators, general secretaries and program secretaries were honored. Wilma was also here for that occasion. The service of celebration at night was most meaningful, and presentations of a special Bible to the previous moderators, general secretaries and program directors.

Our hospitals both in Changhua and Erhlin continue to be busy with increasing numbers of patients both in Out-Patients and In-Patients. There are many changes in the insurance policies and we do not get as much money, therefore need more patients to cover the same costs.

In March we opened a ward for Long Term Respiratory Care of 16 beds (a step-down unit from ICU). Many older people with lung problems need this kind of care. Erhlin has many older people and their families have difficulty looking after them at home.

Our Erhlin Hospital choir went to an Aborigines' Church in the southern part of Taiwan in February. The father of one of our ICU nurses is the minister there. We had a clinic for the people and then we had fellowship with the young people and we sang at church on Sunday. Their Young People (30-40) were most enthusiastic.

I am on the General Assembly Aborigiones' Landholding Committee and we had an educational meeting in Tai Tung on the east coast to help representatives know the various policies and methods and proper procedures regarding their churches' land. They spoke mostly Mandarin Chinese but most could understand my Taiwanese. Pray for the many concerns of the aborigines regarding their land and their problems.

Also in March the Buddhist TV station did a program on me as one of the

Overseas Staff Birthdays

July
22 - Makram Barsoum, Cyprus
31 - Jonathan Schwarz, Nepal

August
6 - Pei Kang Dai, China
9 - Aleida Villalonga, Nicaragua
9 - Ken Kim, Guatemala
15 - Urey Karen Onuoha, Nigeria
18 - Betty Geddes, Taiwan
18 - Daniel Schwarz, Nepal
29 - Mona Barsoum, Cyprus

pioneers of medical work in Taiwan. I tried to include much Christian material. Others who spoke talked a lot about God's love and the important part it has played in my life. Pray it will be a witness to those who watch it.

We had two doctors from New Zealand here last month to talk of various ways for Spiritual Care in Hospice. It was most helpful as well.

February 15th we opened the Dr Jean Landsborough Memorial Hospice Ward with 24 beds. For five or six years we have emphasized our Home Care Program in order to have the patients at home. But the need is greater to have some inpatients as well. The Hospice Ward opening worship was March 15 so I said a few words in memory of Jean and to encourage our nurses in their TLC. Pray for our continuing concern and service in Hospice.

Once again, I sincerely appreciate your friendship, support and prayers.

Love, Peace and Joy,
Joy Randall

Glenn Inglis
Malawi

January, 2001 - Blantyre is situated in an area called the Shire Highlands. Averaging 1100 metres above sea level it offers a fine climate, ample rainfall and the amazing capacity to grow fruits and vegetables common to both tropical and temperate climates. Driving southeast from Blantyre toward the Mozambique border you pass through Thyolo where tea is grown. The rolling countryside offers the most beautiful shades of green extending out into purple hills.

As you approach Mulanje you pass by smaller farms growing maize and vegetables. The road turns and suddenly there is Mulanje Mountain, over 3000 metres above sea level, not really a mountain but a massif, a solitary and gigantic rock pushed high out of the Great Rift Valley, holding sway over all it surveys. From atop you can look deep into Mozambique, far into the heartland of Africa.

There are other journeys to take, all equally rewarding. For many visitors Lake Malawi is another satisfying experience. Dugout canoes pass by in late afternoon, cutting through the shimmering waves as they catch the last rays of the setting sun. Along the lake you may hear singing in the evening as sound travels and allows no privacy.

Up north is the Nyika Plateau, a unique geographic area. The Scots thought they had rediscovered the Highlands even to the point of cold winds rushing over treeless hillsides. Just to the east is Livingstonia Mission, the founding partner to Blantyre Mission in the south. There is something holy about Livingstonia. You can't spend a day and a night there without being changed. Africa enters your mind and won't come out again.

The other part of Malawi is not so pleasant to describe. One million people will die of AIDS in the next five years. In that period there will be one million AIDS orphans. There are no books in the schools and no medicine in the hospitals. Inflation is 40% and if you want a bank loan interest rates start at 61%. You can buy anything you want in Blantyre but 60% of the people have less than one dollar a day to

spend on everything they might need, including food, shelter, education and health care.

In terms of the journey described above, a little snooping reveals less pleasant images. Tea pickers work all day for the equivalent of about seventy-five cents. Where tea, coffee, tobacco and sugar are grown on plantations there is no land left over for gardens. Thus, these are the areas of highest malnutrition. Lake Malawi is home to bilharzia at levels that make it risky to take a swim.

On the Nyika, as with most of Malawi's game parks and nature reserves, poaching is wiping out beautiful herds of antelope, buffalo and elephants. Sometimes the contrasts get so stark you want to cry - as when you know there is one hospital in Blantyre that has anti-HIV medication reserved for a few dozen people who can afford it.

Sometimes the contrasts are so outrageous you can only laugh - as when the local paper in its health column carried tips on the treatment of frostbite. A medical friend in Canada once cautioned those of us working in developing countries to avoid letting our highs get too high or our lows too low. It is sound advice for one can feel the tugs of both elation and despair in the same day, even the same moment.

The work I have been doing is mainly in education for democracy and human rights. This year we are pushing into the area of advocacy. Advocacy is trying to equip community groups with the information and skills they need to 'use the system' and to ensure leaders are accountable and resources are used for the good of all. It is an important opportunity and I believe it is the way we need to go. But on the down side there is growing corruption and troubling signs that more and more power is being exercised by fewer and fewer people.

I was in Canada during November and spoke to congregations and other groups in the Toronto and Ottawa areas, as well as Vancouver Island and the Fraser Valley. The focus for this trip was an International Affairs Committee Round Table held in Victoria. This was the second of four meetings across Canada to look at key mission issues and to chart the course for our mission work over the next decade or so. At Victoria we were discussing democracy, human rights and the growth of civil society, all from the perspective of our Christian witness. It was a fascinating experience for me and my Malawian colleague, Billy Mayaya, who was with me.

I use the word 'fascinating' because I detected in my Canadian colleagues the same paradox of experience I encounter in Malawi. Canada can be described in the most glowing terms from geography to stability to civility. But at the same time there is the real sense of loss of control as important decisions about health and economic policy are dictated not by need or national interest but by 'market forces.'

So it is with Malawi. There is practically no public bus service left here because the government is not allowed by the IMF to subsidize transportation. But the roads are so bad no entrepreneur will risk sending new buses over roads that disappear in the rainy season. So people wait or walk. The government cannot subsidize the agricultural industry so it watches cheap chickens and eggs from South Africa and Zimbabwe wipe out the local

industry. The European Community, which officially espouses free trade and the benefits of globalization, annually spends more money subsidizing European agriculture than the total monetary value of all agricultural exports of all countries of sub-Saharan Africa.

Looking at the world economy from the top is heady business with mergers, acquisitions, new products and enormous wealth. Looking at the world economy from the bottom is depressing with most people getting poorer, sicker and, angrier.

Any economic system that does not honour the widow, the orphan and the sojourner carries its own judgment within itself.

I am growing more and more convinced of two things: first is an insight we shared in a Homiletics class long ago at Knox College. Simply stated, the idea is that God does not need to judge human sin as, for example, a human magistrate needs to hear every case brought forward. Rather, God has so constructed a moral universe that sin brings upon itself its own judgment.

In every sinful act is the seed of its own judgment. Thus an economy that is fashioned upon greed and has no room for compassion or justice is already judged, already doomed. It is a feeling I had in Canada in November when I sensed that many people have never been wealthier and, at the same time, never been more apprehensive, more anxious about the future. Any economic system that does not honour the widow, the orphan and the sojourner carries its own judgment within itself.

The second thing I have become convinced of is that I cannot change the world. This has depressed me for sometime as I actually would like to be like Jesus in the Temple, only this time take the whip to Wall Street or the Banks in Brussels or Zurich. But, I realized, that even the most righteous crusade becomes sullied with self-righteous ambition. So the world is safe for now.

On a serious note, I believe that the revolution for human dignity, for justice and peace, for the restoration and protection of the natural world, must begin in the communities of the world. Certainly, we need people to address global issues in global forums, we need a voice and a program for change, but for most of us the context is more immediate and prosaic. Democracy grows from the grassroots or not at all. Advocacy comes from the voice of the people who will not be silenced.

As the Church are we a voice for the voiceless or the mouthpiece for the status quo?

We enjoy receiving letters of encouragement from so many congregations in Canada. Your prayers are important to us.

In Christ,
Glenn, Linda, Luke and Naomi

Bayron Rocha
Chaguitillo, Nicaragua

February, 2001
Ladies of the WMS:
It is, for me, a real pleasure to be able to

write you. My name is Bayron Rocha and I am a student in computer science at the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua. All because of your unconditional help for which I am deeply grateful since without your help my hopes and dreams would have been frustrated. There are no words on earth to express what I feel for you at this moment because of your generosity. I give thanks to God from the bottom of my heart for having given me the chance to finish my studies and to become a professional equipped to assist the progress of my country and the well-being of my family.

I am putting all my efforts into my studies so that I shall not disappoint you and so that I can finish my university studies well.

I take my leave in the most fraternal fashion wishing you every success in your activities and God's blessings always.

Sincerely,
Bayron Pastor Rocha Soza

Augusto Cotto
El Salvador

Augusto Cotto, son of a Baptist pastor killed during the war here, has, since the signing of the peace accords, worked with the National Civilian Police. He is currently stationed in San Vicente, where Tuesday's earthquake hit most severely. A school collapsed and only three children survived.

February 2001 - I am here in San Vicente and I have received several messages about the "new earthquake" just a month after the last one.

I have not been able to write until now because we have had serious communications problems. I am writing on battery power and the phone lines have only begun to work again "for moments at a time" a few hours ago. We still have no electricity.

The epicentre of this quake was much closer: in Santiago Nonualco, in the Department of La Paz. It hit the northern parts of the Departments of La Paz, Cuscatlan,

Prayer Requests

Taiwan

1. Pray God will continue to work in and through the lives of the Christian young people in Taiwan.
2. Pray for the many concerns of the aborigines regarding their land and their problems.
3. Pray for the continuing concern and service in Hospice care.

El Salvador

1. Pray for the people and the land as they recuperate from the effects of the earthquake.

Nicaragua

1. Pray for students like Bayron Rocha as they advance in their studies.

Malawi

1. Pray for the Inglis family whose ministry is diverse and challenging.
2. Pray that more Canadians will become aware of the political and economic needs of other countries.
3. Pray for patience for Heather Jones and the people of her area through the mud and rain.

and San Vicente hard.

In general terms, I can say that about 300 people have died. Here in San Vicente itself, we have almost 90 deaths recorded up to the moment along with about 1000 injured and several thousand houses destroyed. In the City of San Vicente with at least forty to fifty percent of the houses down, about 90% of the streets are closed because the people have had to move into them to sleep at night.

Perhaps the worst thing is that strong tremours continue about every ten minutes or so. The panic is general and many houses are still falling because of these tremours. Here in San Vicente, there are five municipalities where the centres have been destroyed and some 70 or 80% of outlying areas are completely destroyed.

The Pan-American Highway is almost impossible to negotiate. Alternate roads are buried and the chaos is everywhere. There is no light, only a few phone lines, and no food or water since the shelves in all the shops are bare. In Cojutepeque there was major damage in both the city and all outlying areas.

Augusto Cotto

Heather Jones
Malawi

February 2001 - I was humming that Paul Simon song for most of the trip: "Slip sliding away". Also praying that I wouldn't. Slide away, that is. The rains have started here, you see. And it has been raining! Every day! So, driving on dirt roads has become something of a challenge. While you in Canada are trying not to slide off roads covered in snow or ice, I am here in Malawi, trying not to slide off roads made of mud. As my car was fishtailing from side to side, I realized that there are many similarities between driving on snow and mud.

However, I made it safe and sound. While my fingers are a bit cramped from gripping the steering wheel, and my car is covered with Rumphi mud, it was well worth it.

The trip was made to three schools in the Rumphi district, to deliver storybooks. When I was in Canada last year, I was invited to speak to students at Elkhorn Public School, in North York. Thanks to the enthusiasm of Nina Hillier, a volunteer at the school, and Mary Salvarinas, School Principal, the school embarked on a Millennium Mission to collect used books to send to Malawi. In late November, 14 cartons of books arrived on my doorstep! Unfortunately, schools closed in mid-November for the long school break, so we had to wait to make our deliveries.

Books are one of the few things that are worth sending to us here in Africa. Books to help children learn to read are very scarce and very expensive here. The Education Department of the church operates more than 500 primary schools. Most schools have only a few textbooks, and no storybooks. Some schools have neither. I am amazed that children do learn to read here. It is a credit to their determination that they succeed. Almost everything that they read is off the blackboard, when the teachers are able to buy chalk.

So, it was a pleasure and an honour for me to be invited to help deliver the books from Elkhorn School. There are now three rural schools that have significant libraries,

where earlier in the week, none existed.

The first school we visited was the one on the mud road. Approximately 30 minutes outside of Rumphi town, following the fast flowing South Rukuru River, we arrived at Lukali Full Primary School. Mr. Chavula, the Headmaster, greeted us with joy and warmth. The junior and senior students gathered in one of the classrooms, and the school captains (head boy and head girl) were called forward to receive the cartons from the Education Secretary, Rev. M. Mezuwa Banda. When Mr. Chavula finished his speech of thanks, there were cheers from the student body. Almost as exciting was the invitation to assemble outside to have a school photograph taken!

Next on our route was the new school at Kakoloha. Opened just three years ago, this school is tribute to the dedication of the people of that community. Convinced that their children needed opportunity to attend school, but ignored by the over-burdened government education system, the congregation opened a school in their church. They built a first classroom block of mud and sticks, with a thatched roof. Spurred by the inadequacy of this facility, and encouraged by the Presbytery, church members have erected two brick classroom blocks with tin roofs.

In his speech of thanks, Mr. Chirwa noted that the cartons of books we delivered were the first books in the school. Since we had arrived after dismissal time, many of the students had already left. All of those remaining were able to hold for themselves, one of the new books. What a delight for me to see these children looking, wide-eyed, at pictures and words, some of them following the printed word with their fingers. Others seemed to have expressions of disbelief on their faces. I was once again reminded of how much we take for granted in the west. I have taught in classrooms, even been in friends' houses, that had more books than this whole school had. How wonderful it was to see this sharing of resources.

Our third, and I thought final, visit was to the school at Luzi. Apparently this is

Delighted students in Malawi carry boxes of books from Canada.

one of the original CCAP schools, built some 50 years ago. Spotting a globe in the headmaster's office, Rev. Banda, in his presentation speech, showed the children the route that the books had taken to arrive at their school. For children who have not traveled out of their own district, I could tell it was difficult to imagine the distance to Canada. However, it was clear that they realized that they had received a gift, and they were very happy about it.

I thought that I was going home from there, but that is not the Malawian way. The Presbytery Clerk/Manager of Schools, and other members of the Presbytery Education Committee who had traveled with us, wanted to express their appreciation. So, we returned to the manse at Rumphi for lunch. I was the lucky recipient of their gratitude.

In other times, in other cultures, it was the practice to kill the messenger. Today, in Malawi, it is the practice to shower the messenger with food and praise and prayers. I am grateful for the chance that I have been given to receive these gifts. Along with my Education Department colleagues and the students of Lukali, Kakoloha, and Luzi CCAP Schools, I give thanks to those who made all of this happen.

In service,

Heather Jones
Schools Chaplain

CHANGE OF ADDRESS
Effective March 19, 2001

John & Viola Duff
661 St. Thomas Line
Paradise NF A1L 3V2
email: john.duff@roadrunner.nf.net

NEWS

International Tribunal

For a number of years, the women of the Korean Christian Church in Japan and in our partner churches in Korea have supported the struggle of the "comfort women" to gain an apology from the government of Japan.

In December, 2000, a "Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery" was held in Tokyo to draw attention to this ongoing struggle.

Linda Ervine, a minister of the United Church of Canada, recently appointed as coordinator of the Japan-North America Commission on Mission (JNAC) of which both the Korean Christian Church in Japan and our church are members attended part of this International Tribunal. The following is her description of this meeting as found in her report to JNAC in January 2001.

"I attended the opening night which was a very profound experience for me. Many of the 'comfort women' were in attendance. As they laid flowers in remembrance of those who had passed on before the Tribunal Hearing, and as they paraded across the stage I was in tears. Their courage was so strong and while not all are Christians their faith was so evident in how they walked across the stage, bowed, raised a flower, touched a picture, closed hands and prayed, knelt, or just stood. I felt blessed by such courage and faith, and then we sang 'We Shall Overcome' ... and I truly believed that indeed we would overcome all the pain and violence in the world and love would prevail for all time...."

International Ministries made a grant to support the conference from its legacy funds.

Canada Announces Diplomatic Relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

John Manley, Foreign Affairs Minister, has announced that Canada has established diplomatic relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). The announcement follows the decision taken by Canada on July 26 to recognize the DPRK as a state and member of the international community.

"Establishing diplomatic relations will create formal channels through which Canada and the DPRK can further enhance communications and co-operation and develop a deeper understanding of each other," said Mr. Manley. "At this juncture, Canada believes that closer relations with Pyongyang is the best way to contribute to security, non-proliferation and humanitarian challenges in the region."

The Minister added that ties between both nations would be based on the principles of mutual respect for national sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs, and would be in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international laws and practices.

Since 1997, the Canadian government has donated approximately $30 million in humanitarian aid to the DPRK through the United Nations World Food Program and Canadian non-governmental organizations.

Canadian Churches Condemn Iraq Sanctions

Toronto - Marking ten years since the start of the Gulf War on January 16, 2001, a coalition of churches and church related agencies today condemned the economic sanctions against Iraq, calling for their immediate cancellation. It also called upon the Canadian government to change policy on Iraq by ending its support for the sanctions and work on a new policy to create peace and security for Iraq's 23 million citizens.

Speaking on behalf of Inter-Church Action, Rev. Chris Ferguson, United Church of Canada, said the war against Iraq has never really ended. Acknowledging that the churches have in the past supported sanctions as an alternative to war, he said "the sanctions against Iraq have inflicted so much damage on the civilian population that they have become a form of war, rather than an alternative to war. We believe they are unjust and immoral."

UN agencies in Iraq estimate that 1.5 million civilian deaths are attributable to the sanctions, at least half of them young children. Polluted water and a decrepit health care system are major factors in many of these deaths. Once with a standard of living that approached many developed countries, Iraq has experienced a dramatic reversal with development indicators comparable to some of the poorest countries in the world.

Other church spokespersons lamented the Canadian government's reluctance to oppose the sanctions. Dr. Marjorie Ross of The Presbyterian Church in Canada said that "given the government's emphasis on 'human security' as opposed to 'national security', one would have expected it to seriously challenge the legitimacy of the sanctions. We had a great opportunity to use our seat on the UN Security Council to do that but it seems fear of irritating the Americans overcame any ideas of speaking out."

In the Society

Presbyterial

The 87th meeting of **Lanark and Renfrew** Presbyterial was held January 27, 2000 in Arnprior Church. The theme *Revive Us* (1 Corinthians 3:19-20) was carried through the sessions. President Florence Nesbitt presided.

Arnprior women conducted morning devotions. Rev. Milton Fraser welcomed everyone. Reports were given and a Bible study was conducted by Lottie Sutherland.

Afternoon speaker, Peter Rombeek, a Christian leader from Ottawa, spoke on Canada Youth 2000 that he attended. Peter urged us to tell our young people how much God loves them, and to make them welcome in our church activities. Peter sang and played his guitar.

Mr. Fraser installed the officers for 2001. New president Lottie Sutherland closed the meeting with prayer.

Looking Ahead! was the challenge given to members of **Sarnia** Presbyterial by Rev. Margaret Robertson, Program Secretary for the WMS. She urged us to look ahead and to consider the future of our organization.

The Sarnia Annual Meeting was held January 20 in St. Andrew's, Strathroy. The theme was *Shake it Off and Step Up.* President Anna Jean McCoskery, opened with prayer. Margaret Smith, Elder, welcomed everyone.

An In Memoriam Service was conducted by Dorothy Neal. A moment of silence was observed in memory of Bette Gene Shanks and Sally Lambert.

The officers for 2001 were installed by Rev. Christine O'Brien. Helen Armstrong, who retired after many years of service, was thanked.

Closing devotions "Run with Courage" were conducted by members of the Mary and Martha Group: Donna Smedley and Margaret Smith, with pianist Kathleen Arrand.

Brockville Presbyterial met at Knox, Morrisburg on January 24, the theme being *children and youth.* President Henny Donkersteeg constituted the meeting and Mary Moorhead, President of Council Executive, brought greetings. Henny and Mary conducted worship.

Rev. Geoff Howard, guest minister, conducted a Bible study on the Prodigal Son. Many insightful conclusions were arrived at to benefit our children and youth with acceptance, forgiveness, security and love.

Quebec area staff Anita Mack, along with Donna McIlveen and Judy Messenger, who both work with children and youth in our Presbytery, formed a panel, moderated by Margaret Reynolds.

Anita Mack installed the officers for 2001.

The 86th Annual Meeting of **Edmonton-Peace River** Presbyterial was held at Millwoods Church, Edmonton, February 25. President Norma Proudfoot welcomed everyone, especially members from Grande Prairie. The theme was from *James 1* with Eileen Colqulhoun reading the scripture.

Marg Befus, Synodical President called attention to the historical albums,

dating back to 1925, which had been brought from Peace River by Jean Cameron.

Mickey Johnston gave information regarding a new Presbyterian Church, which will be opening in Sherwood Park in the near future. Rev. Ken Wheaton, minister of Millwoods, welcomed everyone and said grace.

At the afternoon session, June Stevenson, Editor of Glad Tidings, spoke on her travels through the years and explained briefly how the magazine is produced. Edna Murray thanked June.

The officers for 2001 were installed by Margaret Befus.

June addressed people of the Presbytery, including young people, at First Church, Edmonton on Sunday February 26, telling of her travels and showing slides.

Central Alberta Presbyterial met in St. Andrew's, Red Deer, February 27. Opening worship was led by Anja Oostenbrink, who used hymns, scripture and meditations related to Lent.

Chaired by President Lois Snider-Norby, the short business meeting was followed by the installation of officers by Marg Befus, Synodical President.

In the lower hall we saw a slide presentation by June Stevenson on Cuba. After a potluck lunch Rev. Gordon and Mrs. Anna Cunningham read a witty dialogue from one of the books in the display. Again, using slides, June Stevenson told us of her experiences in Israel and Palestine.

Virginia MacDonald of Stratford gave a very enlightening view of what it is like to live as a street person in Toronto, at the Annual Meeting of **Huron-Perth** Presbyterial. Pat White, Goderich, presided for the meeting held in Knox Church, Stratford.

Virginia and a friend were part of a group that spent a weekend on Toronto streets with $1.50 and one subway ticket. They discovered the many problems street people face such as lack of toilet facilities; prostitution; and immigrants selling their children for sex to support them because they can't get jobs due to lack of education or language skills.

Presbyterial members were welcomed to Knox by Mary Scott and Rev. Karen Timbers. Morning devotions were given by members of St. Marys. Bible study was taken from the book of James, answering the question, "What would Jesus expect us to do today?"

The officers for 2001 were installed by Karen Timbers.

Following a bag lunch, members from Listowel conducted the In Memoriam, and members from North Mornington gave the afternoon devotions. The roll call was answered by giving one way Jesus, if he were on earth today, would deal with street people.

Glenview Church, Toronto hosted the 86th Annual Meeting of **East Toronto** Presbyterial, February 24. The theme was from Deuteronomy 15:10 & 13: *Give unto him freely...* Warm welcomes were extended by President Lynne Clegg, and by Rev. Leigh Olson and Helen Oakes of Glenview. Worship was led by Margaret Hall and Isobel McMillan.

Adele Halliday, who served in Kenya,

Current and Past Presidents of Niagara Presbyterial left to right: Helen McLeish, Hazel McGraw, Nancy Miller (current), Ellen (Bailey) Main, Shirley Barnhart and Annabel Ovens.

gave a lively presentation on her work. A time of prayer for mission concerns was held and a Memorial Service for members who passed away in 2000.

Rev. Lynda Reid, Regional Staff, installed the officers. Rev. Leigh Olson conducted the closing worship.

Eva Powrie provided an excellent book display.

Niagara Presbyterial held their Annual Meeting at Kirk-on-the-Hill Church, Fonthill. Using the theme *Celebrate*, they observed the 50th anniversary of the separation of Niagara Presbyterial from Hamilton Presbyterial in 1951.

Five Past Presidents, acting as Town Criers, interrupted the meeting from time to time with news from the five decades of the Presbyterial's history.

The officers spoke to their reports after decorating the front of the sanctuary with balloons.

Mary Moorhead, President of Council Executive, was guest speaker, and also installed the officers.

The Annual Meeting of **Westminster** Presbyterial was held February 14 at St. Andrew's, Newton Church. Their minister Rev. Karen McAndless Davis led in morning worship using the parable of the growing seed from the gospel of St. Mark. A Communion Service followed.

President of BC Synodical, Betty Siverns extended greetings, after the meeting was constituted by Presbyterial President Barbara Marshall.

Margaret Walker spoke briefly about Vancouver School of Theology where 18 Presbyterian students are presently enrolled. She urged the women to choose representatives from their churches to the Auxiliary of VST.

Kay Berry led in a brief service of remembrance reading one of her beautiful poems.

Guest speaker, Rev. Larry Jackson, President of the BC branch of the Canadian Bible Society gave an interesting and informative talk about the Society, and the spreading of God's word, with reference to the days of Nehemiah and the discovery of the book of laws.

Larry's wife, Laurie, and Sheila Jakus, assisted in his presentation. Sheila is involved with giving the Bible to new Canadians at the Citizenship Granting ceremonies held in Surrey. Last year new Canadians took 40,000 bibles.

Betty Siverns installed the newly elected officers.

The Annual Meeting of **Glengarry** Presbyterial was held January 26 at Knox, Vankleek Hill. The theme was *Where Are We Going? - Jesus said: Come Follow Me*. President Margaret Ferguson chaired the meeting.

Rev. Robert Martin welcomed everyone to Knox and brought greetings from Seaway-Glengarry Presbytery. Druse Bryan brought greetings from Synodical.

Dave Godmeer, a member of Knox was guest speaker. He showed a videotape he made of his work with the Francisco Coll School in Guatemala City dump. He also gave a vivid description of the poverty and needs of the people.

The Glengarry Presbyterial which has served the Lord and supported missionaries in many ways for 117 years appeared to be at the crossroads of continuing as a Presbyterial, as the Nominating Committee were unable to present an executive slate of Officers.

When nominations were called for from the floor, a relatively new member volunteered, and was duly nominated to fill the vacancy of Vice President. Other officers, including the President, volunteered to accept their offices for a further term. The meeting closed with a joyful thanksgiving prayer that the Presbyterial will continue in faith with God's guidance, and following Jesus' command, "Come follow me".

Jubilee - A New Beginning was the theme for the Annual Meeting of **Maitland** Presbyterial held in St. Andrew's, Wingham on January 22.

President Shirley McCall welcomed everyone and led the worship she prepared with Ashfield WMS. It was agreed to twin societies from the east and west for another year. Lauralee Cayley and Eileen Chambers spoke briefly on the work of CGIT. They shared events at Jamboree 2000 and Camp Council in Rydle Lake, encouraging continuing support from the WMS.

Carol Mackowski, President of the Synodical of Southwestern Ontario shared her reflection on the study Jubilee - A New Beginning. A practical application of the concept of new beginnings is the recent announcement by Paul Martin of the Canadian Government's intention to forgive the debt for Ethiopia. Hopefully this will permit Ethiopian resources to be used for the social, health and education needs of their own people.

West Toronto Presbyterial held its 87th Annual Meeting at Bonar-Parkdale, Toronto on February 17. The theme was *"Let us love one another, for love come sfrom God"* (1 John 4:7). Carol Chin Yan, President of the WMS of the host church, welcomed everyone. Presbyterial President Carolyn Jones constituted the meeting. Giollo Kelly brought greetings from Council Executive and Lynnette Clegg from East Toronto Presbyterial. Women from Runnymede took devotions.

Dorothy Clark spoke of her recent mission tour to Eastern Europe. An Honorary Membership was presented to Madge Cooper.

Rev. Lincoln Resende, Moderator of West Toronto Presbytery brought greetings. Dorothy Clark introduced guest speaker David Smith, Evangel Hall who showed slides of the activities and updated us on plans for the future.

Rev. Lynda Reid installed the officers for 2001.

The 85th Annual Meeting of **Prince Albert** Presbyterial was held in St. Paul's, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. The theme was *Mission is...?*

Keynote speaker was June Stevenson, Editor of Glad Tidings.

Margaret Wilson, Education Consultant, outlined her work for the previous year.

Presbyterial executive for the coming year includes Isabell Bannister, Irene Soderlund and Jean Cockburn.

Local

On October 30, 2000 the WMS of **Fraser Church, Tottenham** had a visit from a friend, Joyce Groenburg. Joyce shared her experiences in the Ukraine, where she visited the Active Kids Beyond Our Borders organization.

WMS secretary Anne Manning of Fraser Church, Tottenham was in costume for the October 30 meeting.

The WMS of **St. Andrew's, Perth**, Ontario was happy to conduct the worship service entitled, *Celebrating Women of Faith,* on Sunday May 14, 2000.

We introduced Deborah, Ruth, Naomi, Esther and Mary, mother of Jesus, through costume, readings and song.

The late Mary Slessor, a dedicated missionary in Nigeria, was remembered, as well as Mary Nichols, who spent many years of faithful service in India.

This service was our contribution to St. Andrew's monthly celebrations throughout 2000.

Lillian Kathleen Wallace died August 15, 2000. Lillian was a devout member of St. Andrew's, West Huntingdon, ON, teaching Sunday School, assisting in the mission band, and an Honorary member of the PCW/WMS.

Lillian was very active in the community and taught in the public school system for many years.

Neva Detlor Cain, who died on December 14, 2000, was a member of St. Andrew's, Stirling, and treasurer for several years in the women's group.

Educated in Marsh Hill Public School and Stirling High School, Neva married Ernest Cain in October 1941, and resided in Stirling, ON where she worked in a store and a car dealership.

She was a fantastic homemaker who loved to bake and tend to her many plants. Neva was a Girl Guide leader, an avid bowler and enjoyed playing bridge.

Above left: Neva Cain and right: Lillian Wallace .

Shown here is George Ross being presented with a Life Membership and Pin by Ina Borger, President of the Margaret Hamilton Auxiliary of St. John's, Winnipeg, at their Christmas meeting December 11, 2000. George has been a member for fifteen years and is the Glad Tidings Secretary.

The pin belonged to the late Mrs. Ina Grof, mother of Ina Borger. Mrs. Grof was President of the Ellen Douglas Auxiliary which has since disbanded.

Modern Day Disciple

Eunice May Smillie died peacefully at St. Joseph's Hospital, Hamilton, ON February 14, 2001. Her whole life was spent trying to improve the lives of those less fortunate. In 1943 she came to Hamilton to work for the Board of Education. Her teaching career included teaching the orthopedic class (physically challenged), being an adjustment counselor, and principal of Briarwood Girl's Vocational School.

Her adventurous spirit led her to take a teacher's exchange in England for one year, to Ecuador with 'Medical Group Mission' working as a dental assistant, and in 1965-66 to Uganda and Kenya with a program called 'Teachers Helping Teachers'.

Upon her retirement she set out to teach in Botswana with CUSO for three years. She returned to Botswana in 1995 arriving there in a four-wheel drive. Anyone stepping into her home felt like they were stepping into Africa with her collection of animals and wall hangings. (Most of these have been donated to the Presbyterian museum.)

She took on the volunteer job of visiting the Hamilton jail and became Chair of the Elizabeth Fry Association, which led her to England to do research on Elizabeth Fry and to write a book on that activist's life. In the 90's she volunteered with Circle of Friends for Newcomers in a multi-cultural setting, looking after the small children of immigrants while their parents studied English. This led to taking charge of a Cambodian youth group, producing dramas, and assisting with crafts and their studies. At the same time she tutored three Sudanese young people, new members of our church, in her home. In free time the children were introduced to her fluffy black and mustard-coloured cat.

Eunice was a very faithful church member serving on many committees including the Mission and Outreach, and the Women's Missionary Society. She was a trusted member of the Session, always putting this responsibility before any of the other groups. For a few years she served as a board member of the E. H. Johnson Trust.

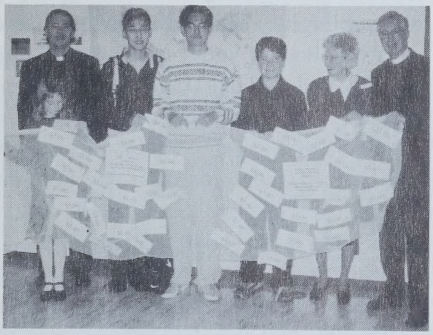
Eunice was a very diligent worker for Amnesty International, holding the position of liaison for capital punishment for our group.

One of her favourite hobbies was the art of pottery making. She carefully moulded the pots on her wheel patiently improving her works of art just as she cared so much for moulding people's souls. She had that very special gift of liking all people of every ethnic race or

status, always encouraging them to fulfill their dreams. Eunice's life and spirit are an inspiration to all of us. She will indeed be missed.

Joan Greer, Dundas, ON

Glen Inglis from Malawi visited **Knox Church, Victoria,** BC and spoke to the children about the importance of mosquito netting to the health of families in Africa. The children and young people had already collected $100 for nets and the WMS Afternoon Group added another $100.



In the photo above with some of the children is Glen Inglis, back left and Rev. Dr. C. J. Kirk. Next to Dr. Kirk is Marion Crockett, the longest serving member of the group. The young people are holding an imitation mosquito net which records the dollars collected. Glen promised to take our greetings back to the children and families in Malawi where he works.

Millennium Quilt Exhibit

2001

June 5 - 20 Rockway - First Presbyterian Church, Niagara Peninsula
July 1 - 15 Quilting Gallery, O'Leary, Prince Edward Island
July 21 - Aug 15 The Presbyterian Kirk St. George, New Brunswick
Aug 22 - 24 St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Norwood, Ontario

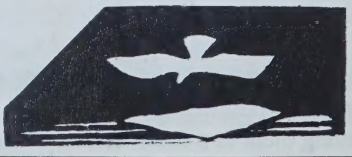
CIRCULATION NEWS

Katherine Allen
Circulation Manager

We are in the process of updating our list of Glad Tidings secretaries for the summer mailing which includes a copy of the subscription list. Please let us know by the end of June to whom we should send the Glad Tidings summer mailing.

It is helpful for us to ensure that we have the correct name of the Glad Tidings Secretary/contact person for your congregation. In August we mail information to these people who are to follow up on the Glad Tidings subscriptions and promote the magazine within the congregation. A couple of times when we have followed up on groups after the deadline date, we discovered that the GT secretary had passed away or moved several months before.

Thank you to the Christian Literature Fund for providing funds to help cover the costs for producing the Large Print issue of Glad Tidings magazine. The large print is available for $10 yearly to those who have difficulty reading the regular sized print of the magazine. If you know of someone who could benefit from this, please let us know.



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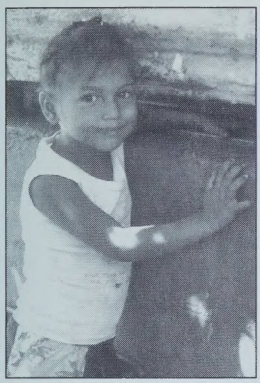
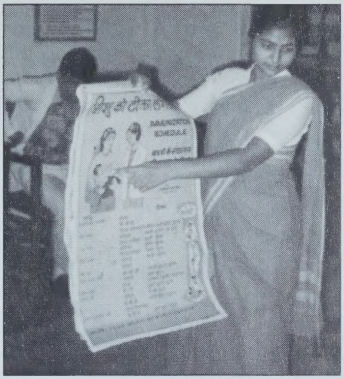

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IN REMEMBRANCE

Helen MacIver
(widow of Rev. Iver MacIver)
Calvin, Abbotsford, BC

Mrs. Adriaantje (Ria) Laird
St. Andrew's, Brampton, ON

Audrey Prendergast
(former missionary to India)
California, USA

Mrs. Florence Forsythe
Bolton, ON
(formerly Glenview, Toronto, ON)

Miss Mary Campbell
First, Brockville, ON

Mary McPherson
St. Andrew's Hespeler,
Cambridge, ON

Miss Eunice May Smillie
MacNab, Hamilton, ON

Audrey Horne
Knox, North Easthope, ON

Mary Cochrane
Margary Day
Harold Harrison
Helen Harrison
Margaret South
Margaret Telfer
Paris, ON

Mae Reid
St. Andrew's, Picton, ON

Miss Beatrice Scott
Tolmie Memorial, Port Elgin, ON

Mrs. Lillian Whyte
Sand Hill, Seeley's Bay, ON

Mrs. Grace MacAlpine
St. Andrew's, Southampton, ON
(formerly Alexandra & Central, Brantford, ON)

Mrs. Marilyn Shobridge
First, St. David's, ON

Mrs. Penny Boyd
Bonar-Parkdale, Toronto, ON

Mrs. Nona Bebbington
Mrs. Helen Downes
Riverdale, Toronto, ON

Mrs. Lillian Wallace
St. Andrew's, West Huntingdon, ON

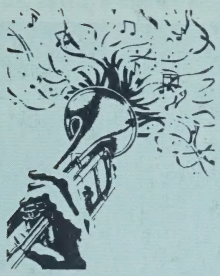
Mrs. Grace Dougall
Willowdale, ON

Mrs. Neva Detlor Cain
St. Andrew's Stirling, ON

Mrs. Ruth McFadden
Weyburn, SK

Mrs. Annie Harris
Knox, Woodstock, ON

But Asaph Made Music with Cymbals



(1 Chronicles 16:5)

He was the chief musician,
This man of talent rare.
Took cymbals and he played them
Till worship filled the air.

No need to blast the trumpet
Nor lead melodic strings.
Oh, no, he took the cymbals
And glorious music rings.

Crashing loud in praises
Or silent in the rest
But from those clanging cymbals
The heart of God was blest.

Not always does God grant us
A life of harmony
At times He gives us cymbals
To make a melody.

But he ordains the music
He writes and leads the score
The things that seem so out of tune
Can music make - and more.

He lifts our feeble arms to strike
The metal, then He smiles
And tells us, through our blinding tears,
There's music in our trials.

Perhaps today the instrument
Upon which you must play
Is not the one that you would choose
Your message to convey.

But God entrusts His choicest saints
With difficulties rare;
So lift the heavy cymbals!
Let worship fill the air!

Linda Wegner

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Glad Tidings

July/August 2001

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Cover Photo: Margaret Robertson

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GLAD TIDINGS reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

GLAD TIDINGS challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally and internationally.

GLAD TIDINGS through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired and motivated to action.

GLAD TIDINGS provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS (WD) or by the Editor.

Written in Love

L. June Stevenson, Editor

July 2001

I Believe...

Thank you, readers! The response to my request to express your thoughts on inclusive language, particularly as to how we address God, has been exceptionally good. Thanks especially to those who kept their responses short and to the point. There is still time to get your response in the next issue.

Reader Response to *I Believe...* (May/ June 2001 page 3):

Now a regular reader!

Since reading Anne Saunder's article in the Jan/Feb 01 issue I have become a regular reader of Glad Tidings. Thank you for publishing that inspiring article and for your invitation to dialogue about God language within our experience and culture. Your beliefs about God as loving parent are similar to my own.

I agree with Anne's observations and concerns re The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Her conversations with and concerns for her daughter's faith/life development are similar to ones I've had as a church school teacher and mother of three daughters.

Painfully disappointing, however, are the narrow, judgmental views expressed in three letters to the editor (May/June 01). The letters judging Saunders' parenting skills were particularly offensive. I believe that Jesus would commend Anne Saunders for the faithful nurture of her daughter, her ministry to children and youth, her provocative questions, and her discernment of the signs of the times in relation to the future of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

I sincerely hope that the opinions expressed in the three letters are minority viewpoints in the Women's Missionary Society.

Carolyn Boyer, Barrie, ON

No absolute truth today?

I wish to say Amen to the statements of Muriel Malsbury, Harriet Broeze and Marcia Whyte. I thank our heavenly Father for these Christians in The Presbyterian Church. It is the liberal thinking, so prevalent in some of the churches today that is leading to responses like the ones made by Anne Saunders and Maria Stam. [Editor's Note: I don't believe that Maria Stam's words were in question on this issue.]

However, I have read two books that have helped me to understand why these liberal thoughts are at the forefront for so many people. They are "The Death of Truth", general editor Dennis McCallum, and "The New Tolerance" by Josh

The old truths are disappearing and being replaced with truths that are left up to each individual to make on their own.

McDowell and Bob Hostetler. These books have opened my eyes to what is being taught in an effort to make the world a better place to live, and heaven help the one who still believes in absolute truth. They are accused of being intolerant. Perhaps the fact that there is no absolute truth today makes it possible for some people to say mother God.

I only know that Jesus had a mother and her name was Mary, and if God is to be a mother as well, how was Jesus ever conceived by the Holy Spirit. Just stop and think about how this all must sound to an unbeliever. It must be very confusing. Everyone has to have a mother and a father. There is no other way to have a baby.

The Bible is the inspired Word of God, and Jesus never refers to God as His mother. To change the Bible to make it more acceptable to some people is wrong and dangerous to one's soul.

Lynda Fitch, Wroxeter (Belmore), ON

New freedom to experience the fullness of God's love

I am pained and puzzled when women, especially women, find it so important to defend an exclusively male image of God. I understand the attachment to the image of a warm and loving Father. I share that. But why does that require denying God as Mother? When I use a feminine image of God I do not feel that I am denying or dishonouring either my father or Jesus' Father. I am simply exploring more deeply the rich imagery for God found in the Bible. After all, does loving my mother require me to reject my father? Can I not love them equally?

One experience as a Sunday School teacher taught me how important it is to assure that God is presented as feminine as well as masculine. We were exploring biblical images of God such as king, rock, light and so forth.

I gave each child a scripture passage in which to find an image of God. The 10-year-old girl who received the parable of the woman seeking the lost coin said she couldn't find an image of God in this parable. I pointed her to the companion parable of the shepherd seeking the lost sheep. Even after identifying the shepherd as an image of God, she needed permission - re-assurance that it was ok - to say God is like a woman seeking a lost coin.

What made this event memorable for me, was the look of sheer joy on her face when she had permission. It was not just new knowledge she received that day. It was a new freedom to experience the fullness of God's love for her.

Gail Turner, Burlington, ON

My God is genderless

Because of early upbringing, God was always Father. Today, I accept an all encompassing God, who can be either Father/Mother. My God seems to be genderless. When picking berries and singing "Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place", I just feel a total comfort. When in Ghana, sitting in a small village without electricity, at a night time Evangelist evening, singing praises with my Ghanaian sisters and

brothers, God was surrounding me. The night was pitch black; I had the feeling that I could physically touch God, even though I knew it was impossible.

Elizabeth M. Tayti, Welland, ON

No reason why God should not be called 'She'

The only warrant for calling God 'He', is that in scriptural times women did not matter. There is no reason why God should not be called 'She'.

There are various names for God in the Bible: Elohim, used of all gods; El, the Strong One, the Ruler; El Shaddai, God Almighty; El Elignon, the Most High; Adonai, the relationship of a master to a servant, or wife to husband.

We give human characteristics and ascribe human form to God.

The English word 'God' means 'the object of worship'. The Greek word means 'spirit', and the Hebrew word means 'The Power'; Yahweh: 'He who was, is, and will be always'.

We see God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and again as Jesus hanging on the cross.

The Genesis picture of God is not Isaiah's portrait. We think of God as being human in personality. The Bible teaches us that God is not fully understood until He reveals Himself fully, and is accepted at His face value.

We do math with our heads, but we believe in God with our hearts. "With the heart a person believes" (Romans 10:10).

Rev. Evan H. Jones, London, ON

Not a feminist issue!

I can't believe that we are still haggling over the use of inclusive language (re

We do math with our heads, but we believe in God with our hearts.

May/June 2001 issue of Glad Tidings). In my view the church has encouraged the use of language which expresses that the diversity of the people of God be acknowledged and embraced in such a way that all may feel and be included.

Perhaps the problem lies in the use of "father" as a person, instead of as a metaphor.

If we would think of God, not as "my Father", but as "like a father", "like a mother", "like a shepherd", etc., then we could understand and embrace the many metaphors used in the Bible for God, Jesus and Holy Spirit.

This is not a "feminist" issue. This is a human being issue. If we believe that all people are created in God's image, and that God is far more awesome, personal and expansive than any one metaphor or image can suggest, then we must avoid words that exclude or stereotype. Inclusive language is important because it expresses what we believe.

Perhaps it is time for the PCC to issue or re-issue some helpful brochures which speak clearly to the understanding of inclusive language and its use in the lives of Christians.

Ellen T. Lemen (Rev. Dr.)

Cassette listener enjoys Decade article

I enjoyed this issue very much (Jan/Feb 2001), especially the article on the Decade.

Joan Laird, Kincardine, ON

More Readers Write on page 36...

THE CHANGELING

As I crawled through
the black depressive hanging fog
in the trenches of my head,
I was overwhelmed.
My mind would not show me
the next move to make.

Sometimes I suddenly found
I was driving on a road
that I did not recognize,
that I had lost my way
on the familiar stretch
of well known
and much travelled
section between home
and workplace.

Overcome with fear
I would sit and cry,
waiting to see something
to put me in touch with reality.

I could not talk with you,
my husband,
who should have been
my comfort and support.

To you, "crazy people"
were to be avoided.
You, who bragged
nothing had changed
about you in sixty years.
While I wondered aloud
if never changing
was really admirable.
Finally Christ's light penetrated
illuminated those trenches
like a flashlight in a house
without electricity,
like the golden morning
lifting the fog of night.

I climbed out of the hole
and breathed the fresh air
after a long year of suffering.
Praying I would stay on top
and walk in the green pastures
by the quiet waters.

I HAVE CHANGED !!
I HAVE MOVED ON !!
I ONLY REGRET
THAT WE COULD NOT WALK
THIS NEW PATH
TOGETHER!

ERZSEBET (pseudonym)

Written in 1999 about a difficult time in my life, in 1974.

Art: "No Longer Strangers". WCC: Geneva, 1983

The Faces of Mission Today: **Pages 7-17 include the stories of Canadians who have taken Christ's call seriously and visited neighbours at home, on sunny beaches and under harsh conditions. The opportunities are there. *What can you do?!***

**As God sent Christ to us,
so Christ sends us into the world.
We are here to proclaim Christ in word and deed.** ***Living Faith: Our Mission*** **9.1.1**

A Church in Cuba: At Worship and in Mission

by Jean Sonnenfeld

Canada in January. The warm sunshine and sandy beaches of Cuba beckoned.

So did the chance to meet Cubans. What better way to meet them than in church on Sunday. On our first Sunday we wanted a taxi to take us to the Presbyterian church in Varadero. The young bellhop in front of the hotel grinned and declared, "I'm a Presbyterian. I've never met a Presbyterian from Canada." After that, whenever he saw me he greeted me with, "Presbyterian!"

It seems all the hotels and taxi drivers along Varadero Beach know about the Presbyterian church in Varadero. There are two Catholic churches in Varadero, but only one Protestant church, the Dora E. Valentin Presbyterian-Reformed Church.

The Presbyterian community in Varadero is 42 years old. It started as a mission after the Revolution in 1959. But under Communism it became more and more difficult to be a professing Christian in Cuba. By the mid 60s everyone had left the mission church except for one woman and a few friends who kept it alive. The small congregation was worshipping in her home without a minister. She requested that the General Assembly send her a minister.

As time went on, the tourist industry was moving into Varadero, with its long stretch of sandy beaches. The rundown house was wanted for tourism because it was close to the beach. By then Dr. Sergio Arce Martinez, principal of the Protestant seminary in nearby Matanzas, was coming to Varadero every Sunday and for the summer to conduct worship. In the late 80s he and his family moved to Varadero to be able to minister better to the congregation.

In the early 90s after Communism collapsed in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, Cuba changed its constitution so that it was no longer an "atheist state", but a "secular state". With this new freedom all the churches started to grow.

The Presbyterian church in Varadero was also growing, and needed a church building in which to worship. Since there is no private property in Cuba, Dr. Arce had to employ his persuasive powers to obtain permission to use some land on which to build a Presbyterian Church.

The Cuban beat of the hymns will have even the dourest Canadian clapping and swaying.

He pointed out to the authorities that the tourism industry had become an important part of the Cuban economy. Since most of the tourists were Protestant, they needed a church in Varadero where they could worship on Sunday. Permission was granted.

The Presbyterians in Varadero had very little money, but Dr. Arce had contacts with Christians in ecumenical movements throughout the world. Appeals to help build a church in Varadero went out, and the money came in. Construction started in 1992, and a beautiful sanctuary was built where local Protestant Christians as well as tourists could worship.

During this time Dr. Arce's wife died of cancer. The church became a memorial to her, and was named the Dora E. Valentin Presbyterian-Reformed Church. When Dr. Arce retired in 1998 his daughter, Rev. Dorita Arce Valentin, became the minister. Dr. Arce is now one of three Protestant ministers who serve as members of the Cuban parliament.

As Dr. Arce had predicted, tourists do attend Dora Valentin Church on Sundays. To encourage their participation in worship, a member of the congregation provides simultaneous translation into English of the sermon and the people's prayer requests.

Every Sunday the church is full. Christians in Cuba form a small minority in a country where religion was officially discouraged until a decade ago. A question a Cuban asked me reflected the non-religious environment in which he grew up. "What is the difference between Catholics and Protestants?" It still takes courage to profess one's Christian faith in Cuba. As a result, Christians in Cuba know *why* they are Christians.

With 5,000-6,000 members, the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba is now the fourth largest Protestant denomination, located mostly in the western part of the country. In 1997 The Presbyterian Church in Canada signed a covenant of partnership with the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba, on a church to church level. Do visit our partner church if you go to Cuba. Not all the church buildings are as new as the Dora Valentin Church, but a warm Christian fellowship awaits you - and the Cuban beat of the hymns will have even the dourest Canadian clapping and swaying.

Being in mission

The Church in Cuba understands that it has a mission to be "present to the people". For Nacyra, a member of the Cuban Women's Federation, this means reaching out to the deprived and depressed. She had a dream of ministering to chronically ill and hospitalized children, and to seniors who did not have access to refreshing and pleasant surroundings.

Above: Health Commission meets on verandah of CESERSE.

Above: Front outside wall of Varadero Church is very effective. Photos by Jean Sonnenfeld.

She wanted to offer them a chance to enjoy the beach environment of Varadero for a few days at a time. (Isn't that what tourists want?) Healthy food and social activities would recreate them physically and spiritually in the Christian setting she envisioned.

Nacyra placed her dream in God's hands, and found the answers among the members of Dora Valentin Church. A couple with a house by the beach were moved to donate the main part of it. This house became CESERSE - Centro De Servicios Sociales Y Educativos (Social and Educational Services Centre).

The house badly needed repairs, but the committee in charge had no money. They decided to start with programs. While a group of children with cancer were staying at the house, a member of the Swedish Christian Humanitarian group came visiting. He wanted to help financially...so the first money for repairs came from him and his group.

After that more people heard about the Centre, and money for the building started coming in. A member of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Calgary was working in the petroleum industry in Cuba, and attending Dora Valentin Church every Sunday.

When Nacyra and her husband, Dr. Sergio Arce (they married after his first wife, Dora Valentin, died) were in Canada, they visited Westminster Church. A bond of fellowship was established. Westminster Church has not only sent money for the Centre, but in Dora Valentin Church a banner now hangs bearing the words: "Calgary y Cuba Unidos" (Calgary and Cuba United).

Since early 1997 CESERSE has been serving the sick, the poor, the young and the old, under the patronage of the Presbyterian Church in Varadero and the Christian Peace Conference of Latin America. The Centre can accommodate more than 600 needy people a year for up to five days at a time, dependent on its finances. The Presbyterian Church in Canada sent a donation that allowed the Centre to buy much needed furniture and kitchen equipment. The Canadian Embassy in Havana asked for a list of the Centre's most pressing needs, and subsequently donated a refrigerator and some furniture. The donation of a bus meant that visitors being served by the Centre could enjoy outings and excursions farther afield.

Young people from Knox, Burlington in courtyard at Dora Valentin Church, Cuba. Photo by Carolyn Wilkins.

Visitors from abroad are welcome to stay at the Centre. Nacyra invites them to come and learn more about Cuba, its people and its church, as well as its language. Accommodation, meals and bus excursions are cheap by our standards, but the income provides the finances to bring more deprived people in for a few days of refreshment and recreation. The Centre is not fancy, like the hotels further along the beach, but it is full of love and the hope that you will feel at home among Cuba's Christian community.

As Nacyra Gomez said, "We may be poor, but we're not miserable". The Rev. Dorita Arce explained that Cuban Christians have had to discover what is necessary in life, and to live with that. These Christian leaders have responded to the call to "do" Christianity in their own part of the world.

Dora E. Valentin Presbyterian-Reformed Church, 34 Street, Varadero. Sunday worship: 10:30 a.m. Phone (53-5) 61-2088.

CESERSE: 51 Street and Beach Avenue (Avenida Playa), Varadero. Phone: (53-5) 61-2389.

North Meets South:

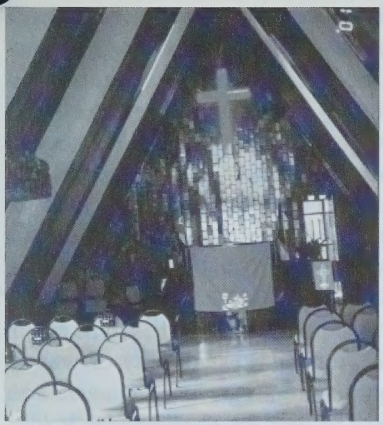
Knox Presbyterian Church, Burlington, Ontario Connects with Varadero Presbyterian-Reformed Church, Cuba

by Carolyn Wilkins, Margaret Taylor
Evening Auxiliary, Knox, Burlington

My husband, Barry, and I, on a recent vacation trip to Cuba, took the opportunity to attend a Sunday morning worship service at the Dora E. Valentin Presbyterian-Reformed Church, Varadero, Cuba.

We arrived early in order to present them with some items we had brought from Canada, and which we knew they needed. We also presented the pastor, Dorita Arce Valentin with one of the new hymnbooks (1997), some WMS bookmarks and the bulletin from our Church for that Sunday.

The women were having a meeting as we arrived so Dorita introduced me, gave out the bookmarks, and translated the WMS purpose into Spanish. We joined three other Canadian couples attending church that morning. The sermon was translated into English and we took communion. We had a delightful time and thoroughly enjoyed meeting everyone.



Some time ago, Knox, Burlington made a banner which was sent to the Varadero Presbyterian church and the pastor acknowledged this gift during the service.

I also learned that a United Church Youth Group in Calgary had raised funds to bring a Cuban Youth Group to Calgary this July. I met the Youth leader and expressed my excitement for him and his group.

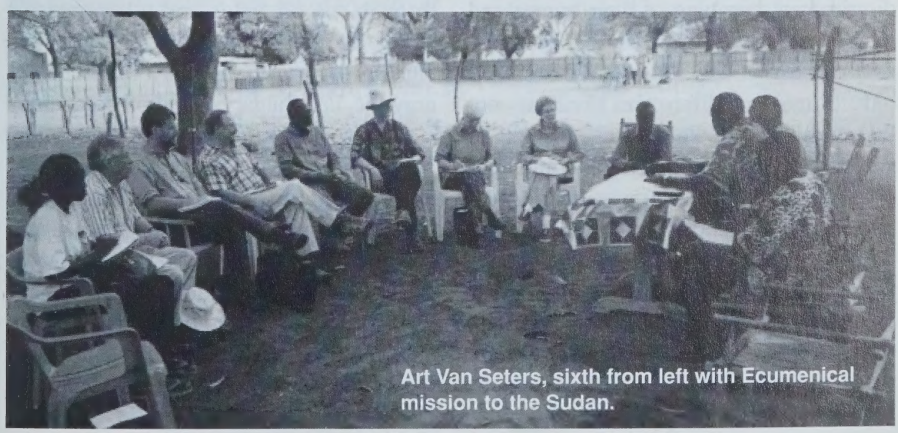
Left: Inside Dora E. Valentin Presbyterian-Reformed Church, Cuba. Photo by Jean Sonnenfeld.

The women of Sudan inspire persistent hope for peace

by Arthur Van Seters

In the days before our ecumenical mission entered Sudan, we were helped by the New Sudan Council of Churches in Nairobi to prepare for our encounter. We needed lots of background information (which we received in spades), but we also gained some sense of how the churches were working for peace in a country that has been besieged by war for most of the last half century.

The massive number of deaths and the internal displacements of four million people, plus hundreds of thousands of refugees numbs the mind and breaks the heart. In recent years the violence has escalated further as oil royalties flowing into



Art Van Seters, sixth from left with Ecumenical mission to the Sudan.

In the fragile world of Sudan, women pump for water as the war continues.

the hands of the military dictatorship have allowed the construction of a munitions factory and the increased arming of government forces and the government supported Arab militia.

Yet in the midst of so much suffering, we met people like Awut Deng Acuil. She is tall, soft-spoken and unbelievably courageous. She told us of her work with the women of southern Sudan who struggle to keep their households together because most of the men in their villages are fighting in this civil war or have been killed.

The children in so many areas of the south are especially traumatized by the indiscriminant bombing of their homes and villages - just because they are in the south. These shrapnel bombs are designed only to maim and terrorize civilians, not kill combatants. The peace process is stalled and a few southern field commanders, who have been co-opted and armed by the government, have turned on their brothers. The women believe that they can make a difference.

People like Awut push hard for peace at the grassroots level. In many areas where the New Sudan Council of Churches works the women call for a people to people peace process. They seek to bring communities together to find ways of peace including among them non-military chiefs and elders. They use songs, dance and dialogue and help everyone to relax enough to listen to each other and imagine possibilities for peace. The women affirm life and show a persistence in bringing people together to resolve conflict.

The urgency of peace has to be felt in the face of the raw brutality of war. A young man from the Nuba Mountain area spoke to us near the Kenya-Sudan border. His name is Jimmy Oseriho and he told us of his escape after the February bombing of a school in Upper Kauda February 8th, 2000.

The school was being conducted out in the open under a large tree. The government Anatov bomber flew, he said, a mere 500 meters above the ground and could see the children and their teacher clearly. The bombs were targeted for them. The teacher and 15 children were killed and many others were injured. We saw a video of the unspeakable physical injuries suffered by many of these children

This kind of brutality is happening all through the oil fields and other areas of southern, central and eastern Sudan, including those of Talisman. (Talisman Energy Inc. is a Calgary-based oil company.)

We spoke with scores of people fleeing for their lives and mourning the loss of children, elderly people and others gunned down or burned in their huts just because they are on land that oil companies want to clear for their operations. This is clearly genocidal according to definition of genocide in the 1948 Genocide Convention.

So we in The Presbyterian Church in

Canada need to pray earnestly and work hard for peace. Presbyterians and all Christians across Canada should press the Canadian government to call for the suspension of oil development while at the same time to work harder for peace.

A PWS&D sponsored World Student Christian Federation conference to go into southern Sudan at the end of April is one way.

In Sudan I felt something of the raw power of evil and believe that the Gospel of Christ that we proclaim exposes such violence for what it truly is and calls for the affirmation of life against the rule of death.

John Okumu, chairperson of the New Sudan Council of Churches, met us just before our return flights home. He expressed the hope that through our witness that we could help the world listen to the silent suffering of the Sudanese people. He then led us in a most moving prayer for his country. It was a profoundly spiritual moment and I returned believing that it really is possible to echo the women's affirmation of life and hope for God's shalom.

Arthur Van Seters, a former moderator of the General Assembly, was asked by current Moderator Glen Davis to serve on a six-person Canadian Ecumenical Church Leaders Mission to Sudan March 26-April 9, 2001. Gary Kenny, Director of Inter Church Coalition on Africa, coordinated and accompanied the mission. The group flew into southern Sudan to witness the affects of the violent expulsion of indigenous peoples from the areas of the oil fields, mostly in southern Sudan.

News of the Church Leaders visit to Sudan is on page 38.

Hugh and Frances Nugent on study exposure tour.

Highlights of the *Flames* Exposure Tour - *To Nicaragua and Costa Rica*

by Frances and Hugh Nugent

Some of our most vivid memories and impressions of the trip:

- In Managua - the small houses, the barbed wire around the properties even of the poor; the street merchants out in the middle of the street selling water in plastic bags, baked goods, fruit - whatever would make a little money; the old ruined cathedral, once a beautiful building, and the new one, bright and attractive but without the same character; the good thoroughfares, but the many dusty, unpaved streets inhabited by the poor, many of them unemployed; some attractive hotels, parks and business places.

Five-year-old Carlos is weighed and measured in SOYNICA program. Right: Denise Van Wissen walks with young girl. Photos by Leone How.

- In Granada - the comparative beauty of the old Spanish colonial city, with a sense of history and a greater sense of freedom.

- In northern Nicaragua, around Ocotal - the devastation caused by Hurricane Mitch; the poverty of the countryside and the people, particularly noticeable in the dry season, but a real feeling of neighbourliness among the people involved in SOYNICA; Denise Van Wissen moving easily among them like a ray of sunshine, offering tremendous encouragement towards better education and nutrition, urging those who have learned to teach others.

- Around San José - the generally higher level of prosperity and greater evidence of American (U.S.) influence; the pockets of poverty where the FIEC (Fraternidad de Iglesias Evangélicas Costarricenses) has deliberately chosen to offer its ministry.

- The small but neat houses built by or for victims of Hurricane Mitch, with international help, including funds from PWS&D. The community is called "Nueva Vida" - "New Life".

- The coffee processing plant in Ocotal where teenage girls are paid about $1.30 a day for sorting the beans. Many have children and boyfriends who don't care and give no support. Some of them eat only once a day.

- The school at Chaguitillo beside an Episcopal church - the faithful leadership at this high school, but desperate need of salaries for the teachers. The effort of that community to maintain its Indian heritage. The school basketball court with a platform at one end, used by the whole community for quite a variety of events. PWS&D money helped to build it.

These people don't need us to bring them Christian faith or love - it's there!

- Visiting Joe Reed's place and seeing that he lives in an ordinary house in an ordinary barrio of Managua.

- The rural YMCA's (Asociación Cristiana de Jovenes) and the variety of ways they find of helping one another in faith, as well as their work with young people and children.

- A visit to the home of a farmer who has been helped through the ACJ credit union type bank - whose eldest son is studying to be a lawyer.

- The friendliness and faith of the people at the little Baptist church in Citalapa, who have so little but are rich in spiritual treasure. We will remember their gratitude for simple Sunday School facilities built by visiting groups from Goderich and Deep River, Ontario.

- In ironic contrast, the great paved road past the President's home and the beautiful forested terrain owned by him, his family and other really well-to-do Nicaraguans.

- The lovely, colourful Batahola Community Centre with its teaching and activities and the wonderful youth choir and orchestra that provided the music at the Sunday evening mass there. Incidentally, PWS&D supplied the computers the kids learn on there.

- Joe Reed told us on our visit to INPRHU (The Institute for Human Promotion) that the $8,000 given annually by PWS&D, matched 3-1 by CIDA, gives them $32,000 a year for a great variety of youth projects, mainly in Managua.

- The walk Joe Reed took us on through Barrio Los Torres, where the people are terribly impoverished but, with the help of INPRHU they have a school.

Left: WMS banner presented. Photo by Leone How. Below: Tour group with Chima, guide, front and centre. Photo from Nugent.

- The Acahualinca YMCA that works hard at "providing alternatives" for kids who belong to gangs, including a gang "from the dump".

- Our "last supper" at Cantera - the flowers, candles and yellow ribbons on the tables and a trio with guitars and maracas that arrived and sang to us as we ate. The faith, friendliness and generosity of the people of the FIEC in Costa Rica, now anxious to be unified as a denomination - Presbyterian, but with a Costa Rican flavour. We admired their strong desire to minister to the marginalized people of their land. We were glad to know that these churches have received help through PWS&D.

For a long time I have known that mission was changing. These people, for the most part, don't need us to bring them Christian faith or love - it's there! Their efforts to live the faith put us to shame. But they and their churches have many practical needs as they try to minister to whole persons in Jesus' name. They need our gifts, our prayers, and anything we can do to bring them encouragement. But with some help, there is a great deal they are able and willing to do for themselves as they continue to trust in God to provide.

Rural YMCA. Photo by Nugent.

Two cats tied together by their tails produce union, not unity.

United in Fellowship

Message delivered by Stewart Folster, National Native Ministries meeting, Flora House in Winnipeg, Thursday, May 3, 2001

Scripture: Romans 15: 1-7

A community united. A community that says it is willing to continue in the dialogue. We are talking about keeping our relationship together between the Aborignal peoples of Canada and the Church. We are also talking about living in harmony with one another and with God within that relationship. Well, I have news for you. It is going to take a lot of work; it is not going to be easy.

My wife Terry and I have been married for 17 years. There are no two people on earth who could be so different from each other. Those of you who know my wife know that she is a different colour than I am. My skin is brown and her skin is a kind of pink color. I am Ojibway. She is English and grew up in Montreal so she is also fluent in French. She is outgoing. She is an extrovert. That means she likes to talk and visit with people. I am an introvert. I like to take long walks in the bush

by myself. I get tired of crowds and I hate small talk. I'd rather read a book.

The only reason we have managed to stay married this long is because we are willing to continue the dialogue. When we have serious disagreements, we sit down and talk it out until we have said everything that we want to say. It might take several hours. We might shed a few tears; we might even do a bit of yelling.

It might be painful but it has to be done. We have to be willing to do a lot of work - to give and take on both sides, to be willing to compromise. That is how we will find the harmony and balance. Two cats tied together by their tails produce union, not unity.

Fellowship is the mysterious ingredient of God's domain. When fellowship is present, God's Church offers a positive witness to a fractured world. When it is missing, the Church looks useless and hypocritical. But fellowship doesn't just happen. It takes deliberate action on our part.

God gives us everything we need to build the fellowship that marks the Church as special. We have the blessing of Scripture, the example of Jesus, and the presence of God's Spirit.

We have the example of Jesus. That means we are always willing to forgive and we are willing to accept all peoples into the Church. In fact, we must go out of our way to give all that we can give so that every person on earth is made to feel welcome.

We have the example of Jesus. That means we must show love to one another and we must show love to our neighbour. We all know that the Church in the native communities has played a part in the fracturing of the world. God's love was not shown by the individuals who hurt the native peoples' children. The Lord must have shed many tears because He created the free will of humanity.

Therefore, he could not send a lightning bolt upon the Church workers who hurt the native children. But God's words are still good words today. And God has sent a new bunch of disciples to bring his love into the world. God still cares and he wants the native people to know that he still cares.

In order to achieve this unity, Paul suggests that we look for one common purpose. It could be that we want to honor and glorify God. It could be that we want to show a common love for God.

A fellowship of unity opens the door to God's great blessings in each of our lives. God, who specializes in hope, fills us with joy and peace when we trust him.

The opposite of hope is despair; despair robs anyone of peace and it is found in every corner of society. Despair can even be found in the Church. The truth is simply that we need each other. Harmony and love are not about erasing anger and they are not about reconciling differences. They might be about accepting differences but they really are about needing each other. We need each other.

We need to get to know the people who don't go to Church. We need to get to know the people who go to the sweatlodge. We need to know what they have to offer to us because they have a lot to offer. The people in the sweatlodge need to know that some people in the Church do have the love of God and that their lives can witness to that love. Today, we give thanks to God for fellowship … a community united.

IN MEMORIAM

Mabel Booth

My memory of Mabel Booth goes back to 1972 when she told my mother there was an opening in the WMS office. When I moved to Toronto and began my career with the Women's Missionary Society, Mabel invited me to the Agnes Johnson group at Riverdale and introduced me to Gateway Community Church where I am still a member.

Mabel graduated from the Missionary and Deaconess Training School (Ewart College) and was designated as a Deaconess at Riverdale Presbyterian Church.

Following her graduation Mabel worked among the Ukrainian people in Toronto. Then, in Western Canada she served as a deaconess in Saskatoon and Prince Albert Presbyteries, and later at First Presbyterian Church in Edmonton.

Returning to Ontario, she was a congregational deaconess in Central Church, Galt-Cambridge, and then Glenview. While there, she supervised Field Work for first-year students from the Missionary and Deaconess Training School.

In February 1962, Mabel was appointed to the office of National Secretary for Children's Work with the WMS. During this time she led the cause of weekday groups for boys and girls such as the Children of the Church and Explorers. She produced a quarterly bulletin of ideas and helpful resources for children's groups across Canada.

Mabel served actively on the Camping Committee of The Board of Christian Education of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and many other committees. She served as Consultant in Elementary Education, being involved with the Board of Christian Education with the Presbyterian Church in leadership training and the selection and use of Church School materials.

From October 1976 until her retirement in July 1979, she worked in the Communications Department and General Assembly office of the national church.

Mabel Booth was one of the founding members of Gateway Community Church and a member of the first session. She brought her expertise to Gateway by becoming involved with children's groups.

She returned to Riverdale Presbyterian Church after she moved to the Mennonite home on St. Clair Avenue and later moved to the Nesbit Lodge on Pape Avenue.

She was blessed with many gifts and has left a legacy of deep commitment and calling for ministry.

Mabel died on April 18, 2001. She leaves behind her brother-in-law John Newstead, nephew Bill and wife Isabel Newstead and their family.

- Written by Katherine Allen

Margaret Boyd

Margaret Boyd died April 14, in her 83rd year. Retired Diaconal Minister of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, she lived in Ottawa. Margaret is survived by one brother, two nieces, two nephews and her sister-in-law.

The funeral was held in St. Timothy's Presbyterian Church, Ottawa. A Presbytery Service in celebration of her life was conducted by Rev. Alex Mitchell, minister of the church with Rev. John Wilson, Moderator of Presbytery. Rev. Gary Morton, former minister of St. Timothy's gave the eulogy.

Born in Vancouver, Margaret moved with her family to Victoria when she was six years old. After graduating from the

Presbyterian Missionary and Deaconess Training School (Ewart College) in 1948, her first few years were spent working under appointment of the WMS as a Presbytery Deaconess, mostly in Western Canada.

Margaret assisted in the establishment of new congregations in Flin Flon, Manitoba, in Chambers Church, Calgary and in St. Matthew's Centre, Vancouver.

She also led Christian Education programs in the west end of Vancouver and at Tyndale House in Montreal. Prior to her arrival in Ottawa, she was six years in the Saskatchewan Synodical and was Regional Secretary in Hamilton-London Synodical.

In 1967 Margaret came to Ottawa as the Regional Secretary for the Synod/ Synodical of Montreal-Ottawa. Her new title became Area Educational Consultant.

Margaret loved the work of the church, the WMS, CGIT, and had a great background in Christian Camping. As a Diaconal Minister she contributed much to the church. In Ottawa she became a member of St. Timothy's and was one of the first two women Elders of that congregation, as well as an active member of the WMS. Margaret also served as Clerk of Session and Christian Education leader.

Margaret felt a joy and a privilege to have been given a lifetime to serve her Lord, through the church. She will be missed by her family in BC and her many friends across Canada.

- Written by Doreen Saunders

Catherine Watson

Catherine Watson was born in Strathroy on St. Patrick's Day in 1918, the only child of Guy and Mary Watson. A love for children led Catherine to a teaching career.

She graduated from London Normal School in 1940, and taught in Brooke Township where she was well loved by her students.

Her love for her Lord led her on to serve in full time ministry as a deaconess from 1947 until 1983. Catherine served in a variety of ministries - Tyndale House in the inner city of Montreal, the Chinese Church in Victoria, B.C., and finally Riverdale Hospital in Toronto.

Her work took her into difficult, heart wrenching situations of human pain and need, but Catherine ministered with quiet confidence, a gentle heart, and a deep faith. She loved others and was deeply loved in return.

Catherine continued in ministry at St. Andrew's, Watford, providing key leadership in Christian Education, the Women's Missionary Society, Ladies Aid, and on a review and visioning committee for our congregation. Her summer programs for children "St. Andrew's World Travellers" and her passion for educating others about mission will be well remembered. She was an avid letter writer, whose correspondence brightened the days of many among our congregation and community who were ill, in nursing homes, or shut in.

Catherine devoted herself to serving Jesus Christ, who was her way, her truth and her life; Catherine's passing on May 30, 2001 brought her to the throne of God's grace.

With thanksgiving to the Lord Jesus Christ, we remember the faithful ministry of Catherine Watson, and appreciate the legacy of loving kindness, dedication and compassion for others she has left us.

- Written by Christine O'Reilly

THE 86th ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA

Crieff Hills Community, Puslinch, Ontario, May 6-9.
Theme: Encouraging Our Gifts.

Using our gifts: Left to right - Gordon Haynes, Wilma Welsh, group poster, Lynda Reid and June Stevenson.

SUNDAY EVENING OPENING

Carol Mackowski introduced the program for the evening based on the theme, and entitled "Finding Our Gifts". Each delegate had been asked to bring a small gift to the meeting, preferably of something they had made. In table groups, people introduced themselves and gave a brief description of the wrapped gifts they brought to exchange later.

Carol encouraged table groups to talk about *what happens when the gift offered is refused? What happens when the gift received does not meet with expectations?* and *What happens when the gift offered has conditions or strings attached?* Stories related to all three questions were shared.

WORSHIP

Each of the worship services was assigned to a Synodical. Women used their creative gifts in song, drama, poetry and prose. **Alberta and Northwest** Synodical led Sunday closing worship. Lois Snider-Norby gave the meditation, based on Luke 9 using balloons. The theme was "Coming into God's Presence: Thin Places".

Monday morning worship was led by **British Columbia** Synodical focusing on the scripture reading Amos 8:4-12. Betty Siverns, President of BC Synodical, gave a brief meditation on this scripture passage.

Monday closing worship was provided by the **Saskatchewan** Synodical Core

Committee. Merle McGowan led in worship reading from the Iona Community book "Dandelions and Thistles". The theme of the worship was *Follow Me* which included the reading of Mark 10, the story of the fishermen and tax collectors.

Tuesday morning worship was led by **Manitoba & Northwestern Ontario** Synodical using the scripture passage Luke 2:34-52, the theme *Persistent Prayer.*

Wednesday Closing Communion: Rev. Lynda Reid, Regional Staff, Synod/Synodical **Toronto and Kingston**, led the closing worship and communion service with assistance from delegates in her synodical.

Lynda's meditation focused on God's people based on Isaiah 43:1-7, 16-21.

The worship closed with communion. Ellen Parker, President Oak Ridges Presbyterial led in the prayer of Invitation and Adoration.

PROGRAM
Marg Robertson, Program Secretary, gave the 2000 statistical report: total groups 456; membership 7274.

BIBLE STUDY

Monday Druse Bryan, President, **Quebec and Eastern Ontario** Synodical, led Bible Study focusing on Amos 8:4-12, the theme *Strength Together.* In table groups, everyone discussed questions about to whom we are reaching out with the word of the Lord. She concluded that the word of the Lord is a design for living.

Tuesday Margaret Reynolds, **Quebec & Eastern Ontario,** focusing on the *Work of Our Hands,* led Bible Study. In groups, delegates had the opportunity to discuss ways of equipping the laity, a *Flames* emphasis. Ways in which the national church, presbyterials, groups and congregations could be involved were considered.

The Wednesday Bible Study, *Persistent Prayer*, was led by Dineke Kraay-Hofman, **Saskatchewan**, using Luke 18:1-8.

MORNING WATCH was prepared by Joanne Instance.

PERSONNEL

The Personnel Committee report highlighted changes in staff over the year. In commenting on staff Noreen Marshall mentioned a particular gift of each staff person. Noreen spoke about changes in the Book Room personnel during the year.

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Rev. Glen Davis, Moderator of the 126th General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada brought greetings on behalf of the General Assembly. Glen gave highlights of his visits to many places over the past year, and presented some "signs of hope" and "words of warning".

During his year as moderator, Glen has focused on the *Flames* initiative for Children and Youth. He commended the WMS for providing funds for youth to attend events such as Canada Youth 2000.

In Japan, Glen saw the commitment of people in their leadership of youth. Glen gave various examples of his encounters with youth across Canada, often meeting them over a meal. Those who work with youth are the unsung heroes of the church. They give their hearts to youth, and youth

respond.

The church of today is composed of the youth who participate and witness in the church now - not in the future.

He spoke of how Jesus' disciples caused stumbling blocks for children, youth, and even women. Glen emphasized that congregations need to invest in children and youth now and not wait. Never be like the disciples and others who get in the way of young people trying to find their way to Christ.

Ciwas Yabu So, visiting from Taiwan, works with the Tayal tribal people. She is wife of Yabu Syat, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan, and is herself in training for ministry. She honoured the delegates using her gift of vocal music. Ciwas said that women in Taiwan are still struggling to be respected by men.

Asked when she is going to retire, Pauline said, "Only God knows, and He won't tell!"

Denise Van Wissen thanked the WMS for support in her endeavours as a nutritionist in Nicaragua. Denise talked about her work with the organization SOYNICA. SOYNICA is an NGO (non-governmental organization) funded by Presbyterian World Service & Development and other organizations. She works in the area that was hardest hit by hurricane Mitch and explained that the country is still recovering from the devastation.

Wilma Welsh introduced **Pauline Brown** who has been a missionary in India for 50 years, the longest serving missionary of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Pauline was awarded the Order of Canada on May 31 in Ottawa by the Governor General, Adrienne Clarkson.

Pauline spoke of the Fellowship of the Least Coin, which was initiated by Shanti Solomon, India. The Fellowship of the Least Coin and the World Day of Prayer are very well supported in India. The Bhil people know only of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, especially the Women's Missionary Society because at the beginning it was the WMS who sent Miss Robinson to India very soon after Dr. John Buchanan had left there. The WMS had a vital role in the formation of the church in the Bhil area.

Pauline went on to say that in India, partly because of the new wave of persecution going on there, the churches have come together very actively in supporting one another and speaking with one voice to the government.

She spoke briefly about the area that was devastated by the earthquake. The earthquake did not touch most of the churches and many Christian homes received minimal damage or were not touched by the earthquake. She asked everyone present to remember these people in their prayers.

Jack and Beth McIntosh visited on Wednesday morning. They are retiring after 40 years as missionaries in Japan. Beth introduced Chung, Soo-Hwan and his bride Lee, Shi-Kyung who are in Canada to learn English.

Continued on p 26

Forward in Faith

Since our last "Forward in Faith" column, the finances of the Society for the year 2000 have been finalized. Our revised Budget for 2000 was $1,077,600. The amount spent was $910,792. Receipts from Presbyterials were below $800,000 for the first time in many years, with $775,228 being received

As indicated in an earlier column, Undesignated Legacies were up. These amounted to $355,039 for the year.

The Council Meeting in 2000 approved Estimates for the current year of $1,072,800.

Council, at its meeting in May 2001, approved Estimates for the year 2002 in the amount of $1,089,750. This is an increase of just under $17,000 over 2001, necessitated by routine increases and higher costs.

We would express our sincere appreciation to the members of our Presbyterials across the Church for their financial and prayer support of the work undertaken by the Society. Their contributions have resulted in rich blessings to many young people and women within our Church, who benefited in many ways from the work of the Society.

Giollo Kelly, Treasurer

WMS ESTIMATES FOR 2002

MISSION EDUCATION	
Salaries	$283,000
Benefits	39,000
Health/Dental Plan	17,000
Travel exp/deputation	8,000
Program expenses	2,500
Glad Tidings	10,000
Training events	1,000
Overseas Travel	2,000
Resources - staff	750
	$363,250

GRANTS	
PCC General Fund	150,000
Regional Staff	390,000
Children/Youth	10,000
Outside organ. mem. fees	2,000
Christian Literature	10,000
	$562,000

ADMINISTRATION	
Salaries	$37,000
Benefits	6,000
Health/Dental	3,000
President's expenses	7,000
Annual Council Meeting	28,000
Annual Reports	12,000
Executive / Com. Expenses	15,000
General contingency	2,000
Life membership/youth pins	3,000
Office equipment	8,000
Office expenses	16,000
Audit/Legal fees	10,000
Insurance/taxes	4,500
Continuing education	3,000
Consultative travel/Reg. Staff	10,000
	$164,500

Total Estimates - $1,089,750

Program

Margaret Robertson
Program Secretary

God's People, God's Planet, Living Lightly on the Earth

Introduction to Mission Study 2001:

This year The Presbyterian Church in Canada's study of mission focuses on God's call to care for creation. As Canadians, we are becoming more and more aware of how poorly we are caring for the earth. We learn that 20% of the world uses 80% of its resources. What does it really mean in Genesis 1 when God asks people to care for all of creation?

You may say, "This is not mission study." When we look at the broad spectrum of what our church is doing, we realize that all of our life and mission is impacted by environment.

Farmers in Canada and around the world tell us that weather patterns have changed, affecting crops, harvesting, livestock and people.

Author of study Erin Crisfield.

Staff of International Ministries and Canada Ministries report the effects of climate change - changes in patterns of drought, tornadoes, ice storms, earthquakes, cyclones, torrential rains, and hurricanes - on their ministries:

In northern Alberta Rev. Shirley Cochrane reports two years of drought on land that normally yields 30-70% of 'normal' crops. (p. 19 Stories of Mission, 1999 reports). A year later she reports that severe August weather damaged many crops. Recent large increases in the cost of natural gas, electricity and fertilizer add economic stress (p. 22 Stories of Mission, 2000 reports).

In Mozambique Mark Gordon's work was impacted by rains and flooding.

In Nicaragua, Denise Van Wissen's work still is coping with the outcome of Hurricane Mitch. Karen Plater can hardly keep up to the emergency appeals that come before PWS&D.

We have long assumed that our resources are everlasting and sustainable, but the reality has hit us in the face. If we can't live more lightly on the earth, we will use the 'lion's share' of the earth's resources. We are damaging the balances of nature. With population growth and urban sprawl we are destroying nature's habitats. Many species

of birds and animals are extinct or almost extinct. What is God calling us to do? What is our mission?

In six sessions, this study follows the pattern set out in the creation story of Genesis 1:1-2:4. The study is scriptural, theologically based and illustrated by stories from our global mission partners and ministry and mission in Canada.

Session One: *Humanity's Role in Creation* looks at the relationship between humans and creation, introducing the subject of humanity's increasing separation from nature.

Session Two: *A World of Water* explores the importance of water. The causes and impacts of pollution are considered along with our response as Jesus' followers.

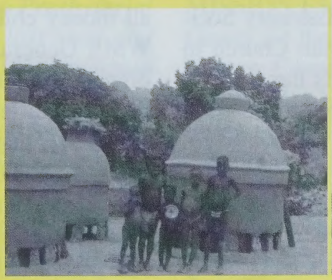
Session Three: *The Air We Breathe* looks at how air supports the web of life and how human activity affects the air.

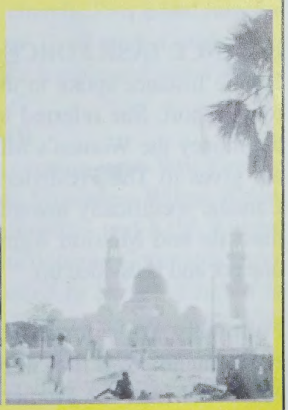
Session Four: *The Land* - Scripture calls us to care for the land and give it rest. This session focuses on agricultural challenges around the world.

Session Five: *All God's Creatures* looks at scripture and our attitudes and behaviour toward plants and animals, helps to learn about biodiversity and its benefits and find ways to see and honour the "goodness" of God's creatures.

Session Six: *Living Lightly* examines scripture for guidance regarding our relationship with material wealth, looks at voluntary simplicity and recognizes that the call to discipleship includes a call to actions reducing our impact on the earth.

Did You Know? that the **Christian Literature Committee** of the WMS supports the mission work of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. It has recently begun a mission project sending twenty-two missionaries to northern Nigerian cities and smaller towns. The WMS gift will pay for Bibles and other materials needed by the missionaries.





2000-01 STUDY RESOURCES

Basic Resources

God's People, God's Planet, Living Lightly on the Earth: Study for adults and youth in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. $12.00

Video - *Who's Counting, Population and Habitat in the New Millennium* - Looks at how the rapid increase in global population is affecting our earth - Study materials included with borrowed videos and upon request to WMS Program Secretary. May be borrowed from The Book Room or purchased directly from the National Audubon Society for $20 US from: www.earthnet.net/~popnet

Learning/Sharing Study and Project for Children and Youth: *Partners Meeting Friends in the Ukraine* (Money raised will help students in the Ukraine to pay the required $6 a month 'bread fees' at school.) One free book to each congregation, extra copies $6.50 each

Video related to the Learning/Sharing to be available by Aug 30/01. $5.00

Order from: The Book Room, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, ON M3C 1J7. Fax 416-441-2825 E-mail: bookroom@presbyterian.ca

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Continued from p 22...

Beth thanked the WMS for their support and friendship through the years. Jack said how important the WMS has been to their ministry. He particularly mentioned supporting the issues of the Koreans in Japan.

FINANCE TASK FORCE

Joanne Instance spoke to the finance task force report. She referred to the fact that the money the Women's Missionary Society gives to The Presbyterian Church in Canada, specifically towards the work of the Life and Mission Agency, goes into one pot and is divided up.

Following are some of the significant recommendations that were approved:

MOTION: that the Women's Missionary Society petition the 128th General Assembly, 2002 by an overture to designate the grant presently given to the General Funds of the Presbyterian Church in Canada to go directly to the Life and Mission Agency.

MOTION: that we continue the grant of $150,000 to the General Fund of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and that it be reviewed yearly by the Finance Committee.

MOTION: that we re-affirm the policy that all money collected for WMS, go to the WMS General Fund, including Thankofferings, undesignated legacies and bequest money left to individual groups.

MOTION: that for a trial period of three years, a $50,000 fund be set up from undesignated legacies to be used by groups for mission projects in their communities. The fund is to be monitored and evaluated

by the finance committee.

MOTION: that we continue funding Regional Staffing at the present level ($390,000) to the end of 2003, and this decision be reviewed on an annual basis. Please note that we operate on free-will offerings and therefore cannot guarantee anything.

MOTION: that we approach the Life and Mission Agency to have the Statement of Revenue and Expense in the Acts and Proceedings of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

RESOLUTION FROM QUEBEC AND EASTERN ONTARIO

Druse Bryan, President, presented the following resolution from Quebec and Eastern Ontario Synodical saying that two presbyterials had closed within this Synodical over the past couple of years which means that their expense fund has been affected.

Whereas, monies for Synodical expenses are depleted by Presbyterial closures thus affecting the functioning of Synodical,

Therefore, the Synodical of Quebec and Eastern Ontario recommends that one per cent of the monies received directly from WMS groups in a Presbyterial that has closed, be returned to the Synodical for expense money (i.e. Ottawa Presbyterial closed and sent $20,853 last year and Quebec Presbyterial sent $400 from which they received no expenses).

MOTION: That the resolution from the Synodical of Quebec and Eastern Ontario be accepted.

MOTION: that the estimates of $1,089,750 for the year 2002 be approved.

COMING SOON: VIDEO on the WMS - September 2001; HISTORY TEXT BOOK - December 2001.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS TASK FORCE

Marg Befus presented the report of the Constitution and By-Laws Task Force. The report was approved as amended in principle and is to be sent to Synodicals and Presbyterials for discussions. Delegates are to bring the discussion results to Council in 2002.

CALLED TO COVENANT

Rev. Tom Gemmell gave an overview of *Called to Covenant*, which focuses on strengthening congregation-Presbytery relationships, a joint endeavour of the Ministry and Church Vocations, Canada Ministries, and Evangelism and Worship departments of the Life and Mission Agency, working in consultation with the Clerks of Assembly. The committee is focusing on ways Presbyteries can improve visitation procedures. They have received requests regarding the roles of interim moderators and interim ministers; procedures for conflict management; and help in finding a pastoral way of relating in the church. Tom asked how we can live out our lives more faithfully in covenant with each other and with God.

MISSION FAIR

Guests for the evening were Rev. Gordon Haynes, Canada Ministries, Wilma Welsh, International Ministries and Keith Knight, Resource Production and Communication, their theme *Called to Serve - Crafted to Serve. So You Want to do Mission?* With the use of PowerPoint, Wilma and Gordon spoke of partnerships with churches over-

Left to right: Sharing their gifts are Heather John ston, Ciwas So Jack and Beth MacIntosh.

seas and in Canada.

Gordon spoke of partnerships within Canada Ministries. They help presbyteries and congregations provide mission in such areas as rural and remote congregations, new church development, University Chaplains, inner city ministries, Francophone ministries, Native ministries, and so on.

International Ministries has 26 partners overseas and 14 overseas staff. People taking early retirement are asking to go overseas for short periods of time.

They spoke briefly of the *Flames* tours that took place this past year. Keith was on a *Flames* tour to Hungary; Wilma Welsh and Maureen Kelly went on a tour in India; Gordon was on a tour to the Peace River area.

MUSIC: Singing was led each day by Lois Snider-Norby who gave some new insights into music and taught some new pieces.

INSTALLATION OF COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

June Campbell conducted the installation of officers. Members are listed on the back cover.

FUTURE OF THE WMS:

Margaret Robertson led everyone in table group discussions on the future of the WMS by focusing on *What are the trends in the WMS? Why are they happening?* and *What is the 'new thing' (from Isaiah 43:19a) that we need to do*?The results from the discussions of the trends and ideas at the tables were noted.

Marg indicated that women interconnect in leadership - they share the leadership and the church is built on a patriarchal level. Some books she has read that would be useful resources are: *Leading Women, Naomi's Daughters, Clergy Women,* and *The Web of Women's Leadership.*

Marg used a portion from Naomi's Daughter which spoke of the changing

trends in the church in relation to women in the church and the changes in society. She referred to a demographic survey from the book and commented on when we look at our own time period we see how we have been influenced by our environment and families.

In table groups, everyone discussed ways that women can focus on the future of the WMS.

Mary Moorhead said that there are many gifts and talents in the Women's Missionary Society and we need to maintain our identity and to look at the gifts God has given.

PRAYER CARDS:

Mary Moorhead referred to the little plaid box on each table containing prayer cards of missionaries. She asked everyone to take a card and suggested that in quiet moments one could have individual prayer time and/or form a prayer partnership for the remainder of the Council meeting.

OIKOCREDIT

Heather Johnston spoke of her involvement with Oikocredit that began in the 60s under the auspices of the World Council of Churches (as EDCS). The Presbyterian Church in Canada was the first church world-wide to invest in Oikocredit

2001-2002 MISSION STUDY

Margaret Robertson introduced the evening. As she read from Genesis 1, everyone illustrated on paper interpreting what she was listening to. Jean Edmunds painted a large illustration at the front of the room. In table groups, everyone discussed what scripture means by dominion over the earth.

Margaret and June Stevenson spoke to each chapter of the book *God's People, God's Planet: Living Lightly on the Earth,* leading everyone through various exercises. One of the delegates, Marilyn MacIntyre told her story of living on a farm. She spoke of the use of fertilizer and only using what the soil needs to prevent over fertilizing.

Marg showed a part of a video *Who's Counting?* from the National Audubon Society - website for this video is www.earthnet.net/~popnet.

June Stevenson closed with a brief worship service with prayer, hymns and readings from each session of the mission study book. The special offering of $991.00 was received to go towards Research, Training and Development for Women in El Salvador.

Pauline Brown, centre, missionary to India for 50 years, says only God knows when she will retire.

NEWSFLASH:

The WMS has hired a new Executive Secretary. Effective September 1, Rev. Sarah Kim will join the staff. More next issue.

BOOKS

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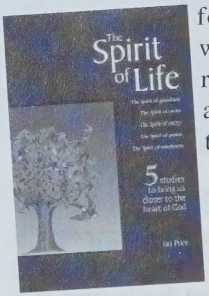
Speaking Of Sin: The Lost Language of Salvation by Barbara Brown Taylor, Cowley Publications G7948 $17.95
Barbara Brown Taylor, voted one of the twelve most effective preachers in the English language by Baylor University, addresses two concerns about the language of sin and salvation. One is the difficulty in speaking words that cause discomfort in mainline churches. And yet abandoning the language does not make the realities it points to go away, and we need to know their names.

The second point is what we may lose if we forget this vocabulary. It will weaken the language of grace. Unless we have the knowledge of what has been forgiven we cannot feel the impact of forgiveness. Contrary to the prevailing view, Taylor calls sin 'a helpful hopeful word," enabling us to move from guilt to grace.

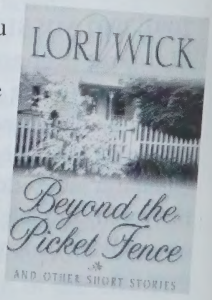
The Spirit Of Life, 5 Studies to Bring Us Closer to the Heart of God by Ian Price, Woodlake Publishing G8013 $10.95
Building on the Bible's repeated message that God has a passion for people, this study develops a positive self-awareness, and reveals the attitudes that shape our relationships with others and with God. The



format is easy to use with tips for leaders, relevant Bible passages and provocative questions for discussion.

Beyond the Picket Fence and other short stories by Lori Wick, Harvest House Publisher G7951 $10.50
Here are eight stories that are gentle and refreshing with warm-hearted romances and enchanting characters. There are stories of people finding love in the most unlikely places and stories that will make you smile at life.

One of these stories may even encourage you to take a risk or do something completely out of character. You will find yourself taking a personal interest in each character as if somewhere, somehow, you knew them.



Come inside the picket fence for a glimpse into these delightful stories of life and love.

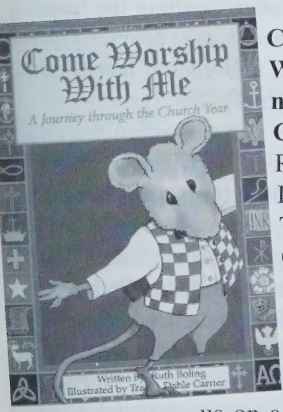
Reviewed by
Laurie Elsden

The Miracle of Prayer: True Stories from Guidepost about the Power of Prayer. Random House $G8016 $10.25

This book allows us to experience the power of prayer with others. These stories teach us to look beyond ourselves, beyond our own lives, reaching out to pray for others despite our own circumstances. We become aware of a constant assurance that quietly exists in everyone's story. An assurance that beyond the silence each individual holds on to a blind faith that despite all, God is listening.

This book goes beyond those prayers that tend to ask for everything we need and want. It secretly encourages us to pray creatively, always reminding us that everything comes in God's time and by God's will. You read about a man's experience while kidnapped by a terrorist group, another being attacked by a shark, and so much more!

Reviewed by Laurie Elsden



Come Worship With Me: Journey Through the Church Year by Ruth Boling and Illustrated by Tracey Dahle Carrier, Geneva Press C0653 $27.50

The lovable mice who took us on a tour of Sunday worship in Children's Guide to Worship are back. This time they are teaching children about holidays and seasons of the church year. This full-colour, beautifully illustrated book is a natural addition to every church library.

Help Is Here for Facing Fear! by Molly Wigand. **When Mom and Dad Divorce** by Emily Menendez-Aponte, Abbey Press C0413 $9.75 each

These two beautifully illustrated books for young children deal carefully with fear and divorce. Each page starts with a clear statement e.g. "Everybody's afraid sometimes," then goes on to explain and give suggestions for the reader to consider. The language is clear and simple, and the advice is helpful.

Children are encouraged to talk to an adult they trust about their fears and feelings. They are reminded that their parents and other adults in their lives love them and want what is best for them.

Reviewed by Betty Siverns

The Voice: A Story About Faith and Trust by R. W. Metlen, Paulist Press G8009 $20.95

This illustrated fable is written for people of all ages, faiths and backgrounds. The expressive little character, a self-absorbed, narcissistic pleasure seeker, will nonetheless invoke your sympathy and humour. This simple story conveys its message with the skill of an artist who captures a story and scene in just a few brushstrokes. Anyone who has had frustrations, disappointments and fears when life does not go according to plan, will identify with this story.

Apologies to freelance writer Joan Bond of Steinbach, Manitoba whose excellent book review was in the May/June 2001 issue on page 29: *In Quiet Light: Poems on Vermeer's Women* by Marilyn Chandler. Joan was not credited for the review.

MISSION IN ACTION

Ferenc Fazakas
Romania

June 2001 - I am sorry for not writing you sooner. I was very busy these last days. I am in the 5th year and I have a lot of exams, and, of course, I have much to learn. I'll have my last "BIG" exam at the end of June.

My name is Ferenc Fazakas. I am 23, and I'm in the fifth and final year at the Theological Seminary in Kolozsvar (Cluj-Napoca, Romania).

When I first felt God's calling, I knew that I had to come to the Seminary. I felt how much I will have to learn to be a good minister. To be honest, I thought the Seminary would be different. These five years were better than I expected. Why? Maybe because of the whole community. I thought, everybody is just studying here, people just go by and follow their own duties. But in the first days I had a pleasant surprise, when I noticed, that the community is much stronger here. We could feel that there is something or SOMEBODY among us. And I knew that is God. I have many friends and they have helped me through the five years.

It is said that the Seminary from Kolozsvar is famous for its practical theology. I think it is absolutely true. We had to go to preach in many congregations right from the beginning of the first year. And each time we spread the gospel among the "village-people", we felt one with them.

In the third year I was appointed to a small congregation. I had to do all the services on the weekends. As a third year student I was very afraid, because I thought I couldn't bear this job. But meanwhile I realized, that serving the Lord is much more beautiful than difficult. God helped me and I have a lot of experiences two years before my finishing. In the first two-three years we study many theoretical subjects. At the end we have learned many practical things. My favorite subject is "soul-pastoring". The experiences from my congregation service made these practical subjects more interesting, because I already knew what the teacher was speaking about. I'm looking forward to putting all my knowledge in God's service anywhere He wants me to. I still don't know where I will go after finishing the Seminary. There are fewer vacant congregations year by year, and it is getting harder and harder to find a "good place".

On the other hand, we can't really choose the congregation where we would like to go (or the congregation can't choose us either), because the bishop will tell us where to go. After all, I don't care where I will start my service. People are the same everywhere and everybody needs the Gospel! There is nobody on the earth who could say: "I don't need the Word any more, I don't need God's leadership and His help any more".

I also love working with youth. I have been in many Christian youth camps. We are organizing a camp for youth between

14 and 25. I will be in a small village not so far from my hometown. I have also attended youth camps with the Youth In Mission team from The Presbyterian Church in Canada organized in Hungary, Croatia and Romania.

At the beginning of the first year Brian, my English teacher, founded a Boys Choir. I started to attend the choir and I enjoyed it very much. This choir is famous throughout Transylvania now, and maybe I can say, that it is well known even in Canada. Our biggest project is the Canadian Tour for this summer. I hope that we will have the possibility to sing in your congregation this summer. I look forward to see you singing with us: "Nearer My God to Thee". Or maybe the hymn "God moves in a Mysterious Way."

We could also sing full of enthusiasm "We are one in the spirit, we are one in the Lord", even though we are on the other side of the world....

Ferenc Fazakas

Allison Cameroon

Spring 2001 - We were dreaming of a white Christmas…and that is just what we got this year. After celebrating a few balmy Cameroonian Christmases, we were thrilled to have a very white one this year. This December we celebrated Christmas three times - in Texas, Virginia and Canada. And in all three places we saw snow! We had a rather rude shock to cold weather when, just a few days after arriving in the U.S., an ice storm hit at my mom's in Paris, Texas, and we were without electricity for 36 hours! This might not sound like a big deal, but coming directly from a tropical climate, we were COLD! We were as ready as anyone there in Paris to have the electricity, especially heat, back on.

It didn't take long for Josiah and Nate to straighten out the names and faces of all their Canadian cousins. They had great fun getting to know each other as they took thigh-deep romps in the fluffy, abundant snow, went sledding and had snowball fights for the very first time.

Life in North America

Now we are settled in Dallas, Texas, for a few months and enjoying some of the conveniences of North American life. We have a clothes washer and a dish washer in our apartment here and her name is not "Lezlie"! When we run out of eggs or sugar, we don't have to wait "a few more weeks" for a huge shopping trip several hours away. Instead, we can just run out

Overseas Staff Birthdays

September
7 - David Villalonga, Nicaragua
14 - Michael Lessard-Clouston, Japan
16 - Arlene Onuoha, Nigeria
16 - Denise van Wissen, Guatemala
22 - Jim Patterson, El Salvador
24 - Christina Schwarz, Nepal
27 - Clara Henderson, Malawi

OCTOBER
5 - Kennis Kim, Guatemala
9 - Mark Gordon, Mozambique
20 - Lezlie Cowley Allison, Cameroon
23 - Glenn Inglis, Malawi
27 - David Josiah Allison, Cameroon

any hour of the day and pick up whatever we need. The boys have discovered, and love to, ride escalators. They have also found out about McDonald's Playland and Happy Meals. We have been doing quite a bit of travelling to visit supporting churches, especially on weekends when Sean is not in class. On those road trips we don't have a tough decision about where to stop for lunch. We just play "I spy" and the first to spot the "golden arches" wins.

"Welcim to the tem Pol."

We are happy to tell you about the newest member to the Kotoko language team. Paul Huey has been working with Wycliffe in Cameroon's capital for the past seven years in administration. He has been desiring and praying about joining a translation project in a village. We invited him to come to the Kotoko area and begin working there alongside us. Paul has training in Hebrew and Greek which should prove to be very helpful when we begin translation. He is currently on furlough, living across the street from us here in Dallas. He and Sean are taking a literacy course together at the Wycliffe training center. They are learning about the different aspects of how to run a literacy program, including how to prepare beginning reading material using some of the Kotoko folk tales that we collected several months ago in Makary. I took these same classes about eight years ago, so we should all be ready to dive into literacy classes for the Kotoko when we return later this year to Cameroon. Now that there is a written form of their previously only spoken language, we hope and pray that the Kotoko people will be eager to learn to read and write their own language. We recently had a dinner with Paul celebrating his official assignment to the Kotoko language team. Five-year-old Josiah, who is continuing to learn to read and write his own language, made a sign for him and hung it on the wall for our "party". It read "Welcim to the tem Pol!"

We have enjoyed getting to see many of you in person already since our arrival in December and hope to see many more of you before our return to Cameroon. We have been so blessed with many warm welcomes and rich hospitality too. Thanks to all of you - our wonderful encouragers.

Love in our Lord,

Lezlie, Sean, Josiah and Nate.

Heather Jones
Malawi

It was a humbling experience to have 20 women appear at my door, bearing gifts of all kinds, offering support and encouragement for my work here in Malawi.

Since the second group of visitors came yesterday, I have been reflecting on a sermon illustration shared by my preaching professor, Dr. Stephen Farris, at Knox College. His story described attempts to give money to people at church. He talked about passing through the congregation, and handing a few people twenty-dollar bills. "This is like God's grace, freely given. All you have to do is accept it." Dr. Farris said people would reluctantly accept the money for the illustration, but they always tried to insist on giving it back. The only exception to this was when the 'volunteer' was a child. Children are better able to accept gifts freely given than are adults. As scripture says, "Unless you be-

come like one of these my children, you will not be able to enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

My experience of being visited has reminded me of that lesson. I had to tell myself, 'The gift is free. All I should do is offer thanks'. But it is difficult. These gifts come from women who often struggle to feed their families. These women are constantly asked to share whatever little bit extra might come their way with any number of neighbours or relatives who are in need. I look at the bounty that they have brought to my house, and I am tempted to say "But I don't need any of this." But the gifts are given, not in response to need, but out of desire to show love and acceptance.

It is a Malawian tradition to share such gifts with ministers. Therefore, the Umanyano (Women's Guild) will share their gifts with me. Between the two visits, I have received: 10 packets of laundry soap, 2 litres of cooking oil, 2 kilograms of salt, 1 tub of margarine, 3 kilograms of sugar, about 15 kilograms of potatoes, nearly 10 kilograms of rice, three large bunches of bananas, two chickens (both still alive when presented, but slaughtered and cleaned for me by gracious neighbours), almost 40 eggs, and 50 kwacha (more than many Malawians earn for working a full day).

The actual event of the visit would have been gift enough for me. Both times, the women arrived singing and dancing, bringing joy and love into my home. The groups squeezed into my living room, occupied all seats in the house, brought the outside chairs in, and still some had to sit on the floor. The women assembled, and the worship service began. We sang hymns, someone prayed, someone preached, an offering was taken. Then we shared a cup of tea (bread, milk and sugar provided by the visitors). We chatted a bit, and then it was time for the closing hymn. I was asked to offer a benediction - I am the minister, after all.

There were many wonderful messages in the time we spent together. That tea and fellowship came between the opening and the closing hymns was beautifully symbolic of the reality that our whole time together was a worshipful offering to God. That we could sing and dance as part of the service was a beautiful reminder of so many of the Psalms, where we hear God's call to us to worship joyfully. That one of the sermons was based on Isaiah 6:8 "Then I heard the Lord say 'Whom shall I send? Who will be our messenger?' I answered 'I will go! Send me!'", was a powerful affirmation of my experience of being called by God. The verse from Isaiah, and the wonderful hymn "Here I am, Lord", were part of the worship service I helped to lead before graduating from Knox College, and my induction to the Winchester/Mountain pastoral charge. On the night of my induction, I felt that God had used the St. Paul's congregation to offer me a special gift of affirmation. I feel that once again, God has used the people of faith to remind me that I am here not because of my own will, but because of God's call.

How many potatoes can one person eat? How much laundry soap does one person need? It doesn't matter. How much grace can be shown to one missionary? More than enough.

In service,
Heather Jones

Died: Jack McIntosh June 7, 2001, David Agwu Onuoha, May 19, 2001. More next issue.

Readers Write Continued:

I thought "Don't Step on my Caterpillar" was a really timely article, and I hope we can avoid squashing each other's good ideas as we carry on within our church work.

I do appreciate the Glad Tidings. I just re-read your March editorial. You said, "...take a few moments to feel the pulse of nature...." I thought, "Yeah, right!" and turned to scowl out the window at the all-day rain. I live in a basement suite and found myself face to face with bright red tulips. As you say, there is renewal, refreshment, and a closeness to God. Thanks, June.

Zena Mackay, Burnaby, BC

You sound very happy in your new home, and no wonder. You are so blessed with so many birds and little beasts in your garden (Mar/Apr Glad Tidings page 3). I also liked the inspiring story of Chet by M. Vanderzweerde. Indeed sometimes God does miracles. Glory be.

And, *Don't Step on my Caterpillar*, made me smile. But when I read this story to my friends, one of them said bitterly: "People often step on your hopes and expectations." To which the others hastily said, "But some times we step on our own caterpillars." And so it went on and on. Please tell your writers that they spiced up our meeting, gave us food for thought, and inspired us all.

Thank you again. Enjoy your garden, spring is just around the corner. The best is yet to come. God bless you.

Lini Grol, Brampton, ON

Congratulations to Lini Grol whose Book *Lelawala, a legend of the Maid of the Mist, Niagara Falls*, was set to music and performed at the Glenn Gould Studio, Toronto on June 16.

I was glad to see, in Marjorie Ross' notes on Palestine published in Jan/Feb 2001 Glad Tidings, some appreciation of the complexity of the situation there. I was concerned, however, by your own comments regarding "the rape and possession of the land and the peoples of Palestine".

"Palestinians", to quote Marjorie, "are very much aware that the struggle is one for international opinion."

It is true that the Jews have been guilty of terrible acts but, on their part, the Palestinians have never been afraid to resort to violence against the Jews. This, even when the latter have been active on projects previously approved under Oslo: projects such as the housing development at Har Choma, or the opening in 1996 of a pre-excavated archeological site.

As long ago as May 16, 1975 Yasser Arafat was reported by the Libyan News Agency to have said publicly in Tripoli, "There will be no presence in the region other than the Arab presence..." As recently as September 29, 2000 in the al-Aqsla mosque in Jerusalem worshippers were exhorted to "eradicate the Jews from Palestine", and on October 13, 2000 a preacher in the Zayed bin Sultan Aal Nahuan mosque in Gaza preached, "Wherever you meet them (Jews), kill them."

Thank God not all Jews hate Arabs and not all Arabs hate Jews. Surely, we can be most helpful when our public comments on the situation there are seen to reflect an appreciation of the difficulties faced by both Jews and Palestinians; even as we pray that by God's grace they may struggle through to some form of workable rapprochement.

Olive R. Anstice, Toronto, ON

Great Middle East stuff in the Jan/Feb 01 issue! If I recall correctly, you got some flak first time around. We had already seen Marjorie's report. We also attended a meeting sponsored by Inter-Church Action (ICA) and a group called Friends of Sabeel. Robert Assaly and Tad Mitsui made a presentation that was very powerful and utterly condemning of Israeli practices.

You mention at the end of the piece that there is a church leaders' statement. You quote part of it, ending with a line about the 'two peoples' of the Holy Land. This ought to snap us to attention right there that there is something deeply wrong with this statement. There are three peoples of the Holy Land, not two.

Are you aware of the process through which the statement went? Did you see all three versions? The people at the ICA event were outraged with the final statement. It constitutes a capitulation to a very small number of powerful people on the Canadian Council of Churches' governing board, who insisted that it had to be written to please the Canadian Jewish Congress. It's a shameful document. Absolutely gutless. I have learned through years of human rights work that so-called 'balance' can result in the demonic when the reality on the ground is anything but 'balanced'. Take good care.

Lee McKenna DuCharme,
Toronto, ON

From More Cassette Listeners:

I always enjoy each Glad Tidings cassette. The letters from our missionaries are so great, especially Adele's (Halliday) letter.
Agnes Fletcher, Merlin, ON

To WMS friends and all readers of the Glad Tidings:

Greetings and best wishes for a happy and blessed 2001. I am so thankful for the Glad Tidings on cassette tape. It does help me to keep up with the news, and stimulates my meditation and prayer life.

I am writing to thank you all for your support through congregational mission givings and through WMS allocations. It really touches my heart and makes me very grateful when I realize that all my salary and travel allowance, and work needs were met by freewill offerings of people who had the same desire as I had to share my faith and joy of trusting Jesus.

I really wonder if I have shown my appreciation enough or said "thank you" for the extra special gifts that came to me for special needs.

In the past two years it has been a great joy to have a visit with Mrs. Ravikent, RN and past graduate in Community Health and Dr. Deborah Tezlo, medical superintendent of Jobat Christian Hospital and Rev. Sankya Nelson, the first ordained female minister of the aboriginal Bhil area. Each one told me often in our conversation of how thankful they are that missionaries came to tell them about God's love through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, and they said, "Just think if you people had not come, we would not have known". They name all the missionaries from Dr. & Mrs. Buchanan, all the way through to Pauline Brown who is still there to support and encourage them.

Thanks to all that support missionaries, and for your love, gifts and prayers. Do continue to remember Pauline and the Indian Christians in prayer.

Ida White, former missionary to India.

Words can't express how wonderful this [cassette tape] was for me.

Marion Ewin, Uxbridge, ON

A delightful experience. Thank you so much.

L. McKee, Edmonton, AB

Thank you for the privilege of having the Glad Tidings in cassette form. It is a powerful magazzine and I look forward to each edition. Keep the news and accounts of our missionaries coming as it helps us to pray more effectively for them. Enjoy poems and actually everything and would not change a thing. WMS group, Laurel Lea St Matthews, Sarnia used the Easter program. We thought the drama most effective and meaningful.

Sincerely in Christ

Sophie Jackson, President,

Laurel Lea-St. Matthew's, Sarnia, ON

Fascinating Facts from the Bible
Compiled by Eve Stickland

Did you know...

Gideon, who became Israel's Judge, had seventy sons?

New Living Translation. Judges 8:29-30, Judges 6:1

NEWS

CHURCH LEADERS VISIT SUDAN

April 10, 2001 - Five Canadian senior church leaders who returned from Sudan April 9, called for a moratorium on oil development in war-ravaged southern Sudan, including that of Calgary-based Talisman Energy.

They insisted that an accelerated peace process is critically linked to the moratorium. The Canadian government should take high-level diplomatic and practical initiatives to support African nations in bringing about a speedy end to a vicious and brutal civil war.

Conflict has raged in Sudan almost since 1956. The current civil war, which began in 1983, has killed two million people and displaced more than four million. There are many conflicting parties but the major struggle in Africa's largest country is between the government in the north and the people of the south, the Nuba Mountains, and other marginalized areas.

The mission spent a week (April 1-7) visiting areas hard hit by the war just south of the oil fields. They met with the most vulnerable people, civilians, women, children and the internally displaced, as well as church and local authorities.

They listened to accounts of slaughter and burnings from people who had fled for their lives days earlier. Some displaced persons said, "They (the government) want our land without us."

Sudanese Church leaders with whom the delegation met described the tactics of the Khartoum government as "genocidal".

The systematic bombings, attacks on civilian targets, forced displacement of civilian populations, mass starvation and other acts of terrorism that have been well documented by human rights agencies require urgent action by the international community.

They were particularly moved by meetings with people who in terror had fled their defenseless villages under attack by government troops and the militias

they support, and were forced to leave behind their dead and injured relatives, including women, children and the elderly.

They were outraged that a Canadian company is a major producer of oil located in southern Sudan, paying huge royalties to the "unaccountable northern military dictatorship" led by General Omar al Bashir." They held the Bashir government largely responsible for the atrocities committed against southern Sudanese peoples.

A major factor in the suffering of millions of innocent people is the rapid exploration, development and production of oil located in the south and which has killed and displaced untold numbers of people, forcing them to flee their homes and land for an uncertain future.

The mission, composed of the major Christian denominations in Canada, was invited to visit the country by the Sudan and New Sudan Councils of Churches, the former based in Khartoum, the latter representing churches in the south which has its administrative offices in Nairobi and a wide network of churches and field operations inside southern Sudan. The government in Khartoum did not grant visas to visit the north for reasons that are not clear.

The team flew to Lokichoggio in northern Kenya, after briefings with the NSCC, Canadian diplomats, and NGOs in Nairobi. In Lokichoggio they visited the largest on-going humanitarian relief program in the world run by the UN and Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS), which is trying to alleviate the suffering of millions of war-affected southern Sudanese.

They also visited nearby Kakuma refugee camp which shelters 71,000 people, mostly southern Sudanese, forced to flee their homeland into what amounts to semi-permanent enforced exile.

While oil is not the only factor in the war, the revenues from the oil, especially those which accrue to the Khartoum government, are making the conflict far more dangerous and destructive. Sudanese Government leaders have acknowledged that oil revenues are being used to purchase weapons and build munitions factories.

Participants said they believed the government now thinks it can win the war militarily and seems to want to crush all opposition groups in the north and south.

"We need peace first and oil later," many Sudanese told us. We agree with them and that is why we, along with the Sudanese churches, are calling for a total moratorium on oil development until peace is in place.

Simply stopping oil development is not enough to bring peace. Canada, which has played a constructive role in the regional Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) peace process for Sudan, must provide more political, diplomatic and material support to this African initiative in bringing the war to an end.

The Mission called for steps to be taken urgently by Canada and the international community: The mission had two objective support by the Canadian churches and their members, all citizens and the government for more effective Canadian policies on Sudan.

Members of the mission are: Ms. A.J. Finlay, Anglican Church of Canada, Toronto; Very Rev. William Phipps, immediate past Moderator, United Church of Canada, Calgary; Ms. Janet Somerville, general secretary, Canadian Council of Churches (CCC), Toronto; Most Rev. Donald Theriault, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, Ottawa; and Rev. Art Van Seters, past moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

In the Society

Synodical

Alberta and the Northwest Synodical met in St. Andrew's, Red Deer on April 21. Opening devotions were given by the Council delegates. These were written by Lois Snider-Norby and were based on the theme *Praising, Loving, Learning, Serving.*

Guest speaker was Agnes Hislop who spoke and showed slides on her visit to India. The offering was sent to the Pauline Brown bursary fund.

The Synodical of **Southwestern Ontario** held its Annual Meeting at Chedoke, Hamilton, April 17-18, the theme *A Mountaintop Experience*. Speakers and Bible study leader, experts in their field gave delegates and friends a lot to consider. President Carol Macowski chaired the inspiring two-day event.

Beth MacIntosh, retired missionary took us on a tour of her work in the Korean Christian Church in Japan, showing pictures, wearing a traditional dress, making a faraway place real.

Youth directors of Camp Kintail, Rev. Gwen Brown and Spencer Edwards, gave glowing reports of a full camp registration, and happenings at "Youth 2000".

Rev. Heather Vais led the Bible study, Psalms 42 and 43, helping everyone see, feel and understand the message behind the psalmist's word pictures.

We were introduced to Oikocredit that provides loans for people who are economically disadvantaged.

Rodger Hunter, explained his work in Boarding Homes Ministry and acquainted us with the need for volunteers.

The evening program included a riotous fashion show using volunteer models. All costumes were original flights of fancy, of nine outstanding women of the Bible.

The Annual Meeting of **Manitoba and North Western Ontario** Synodical was held at the Anishinabe Fellowship Centre in Winnipeg on April 20-21. The theme was *Our Vision for God's Children*, with scripture from Joel 2:28-29.

Guest speaker was Colleen Smith, Youth in Mission. Colleen shared many ideas as to how congregations can involve everyone in teaching and making children feel welcome in the Church. Her many examples of youth working in mission at home and abroad were challenging and inspiring. The evening concluded with the Presbytery Youth Council leading in praise and worship.

On Saturday, Rev. Margaret Mullin, outlined the many and various programs operating out of Anishinabe. The Synodical closed with a communion service led by Ms. Mullin.

Synodical President Ina Borger, right, presented a gift certificate to Joanne Instance in recognition of her assuming the office of President of Council Executive.

Presbyterial

St. Andrew's Church, Hanover hosted the Annual Meeting of **Bruce-Grey** Presbyterial on April 12, 2001. The theme was *Our Children - Past - Present - And Yet To Be*. Hymns well-learned as children were sung. We were welcomed by Presbyterial President Kay Remus, Diana Simpson, President Hanover group and Rev. Alice Wilson.

In Memoriam was led by St. Andrew's, Swinton Park, emphasizing how Jesus lived the gospel, and as a young boy was "about his Father's business".

Following reports Pat Carpenter and Carol Patterson identified values they would wish their children to live by. In "Discovering the Child Within" members shared memories that influenced them in their faith journey.

During the afternoon session, "Children of the Present", the Wilkinson family delighted with instrumental music.

Guest speaker, Diana Wadsworth, shared stories of her life as a teacher with children at the Helen MacDonald School, India. Her personal stories of three children who grew up in India were powerful examples of how worthwhile it is to teach the gospel to children, and thus totally change their lives.

Alice Wilson installed the officers and conducted communion.

Sharing God's Banquet was the theme for the Spring Rally of **Maitland** Presbyterial held in Knox, Ripley on May 14.

The meeting began with a lively singalong led by Ripley WMS. President Marilyn MacIntrye welcomed everyone.

Women of Whitechurch WMS led in worship, "The Invitation to the Banquet". Amy Middlecamp, accompanied by Karen Martyn, shared two solos.

Following business, Ruth Bell, Mayme Wilkins and Norma Raymond shared their thoughts on Synodical in April. Marilyn MacIntyre spoke about her time at Council 2001.

An Honorary Membership was presented to Wynn Fraser from Kincardine.

Ruth Buchmein introduced Guest speaker Rev. Peggy Kinsman, minister to the Lucknow and South Kinloss Churches. Peggy shared her experiences as one of 11 Canadians invited to Kenya and Ethiopia by the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

The 87th Annual Meeting of **Montreal** Presbyterial was held at St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal on March 17 with the theme *Forbid Them Not*. President Grace Thornley-Brown presided. We were welcomed by Rev. Ruth Draffin, and Lorna Connelly gave the history of the church.

Rev. Draffin led worship and spoke about not putting ourselves down. She also played the guitar and sang.

Following business and reports Anita Mack introduced Rev. Marc-Henri Vidal of Eglise St. Luc in Montreal. He spoke of his work with French young people. After lunch the youth group of the Taiwanese church led in singing.

Anita Mack led in a Bible study "Who will be our heirs in the faith".

Lois Klempa gave the report of the nominating committee and the officers were installed by Druse Bryan.

West Toronto Presbyterial held their pot luck luncheon on May 12 in Mimico Church. Presbyterial President Carolyn

Jones welcomed everyone. June Maxwade of Bonar-Parkdale led devotions. Lorna Henderson, former Presbyterial treasurer, shared the moving story of her miraculous recovery from a brain hemorrhage in July 1999.

Reports were received, including those of Synodical and Council.

Madge Cooper introduced Dorothy Bell, of Mimico, Director of Armagh. Dorothy gave a very interesting talk including the history and day-to-day operation of Armagh, as well as some personal experiences of the women and children.

June Maxwade thanked the speaker, and Carolyn Jones closed the meeting with prayer.

Essex-Kent Presbyterial held their Annual Meeting on March 15. Our focus for this year is "Living as a Jubilee People" and the theme for the day was *Be Thou my Vision.*

President Ruth Smith welcomed everyone and Rev. Jeff Loach brought greetings from our host church St. Andrew's, Windsor.

Devotions were led by Ruth McDowell and Ruth Smith of First Church, Chatham, using readings by Mike Lusado. Dresden women led in a memorial service.

Following lunch Carolyn Reid led a lively medley of Irish songs. Robert McLean of Amherstburg showed interesting slides of his trip to Ireland.

Eleanor Irwin gave the nominating committee report and Lily Jones installed the officers.

Brockville Presbyterial met for their Spring Rally in St. Andrew's, Oxford Mills. Diane Gursby welcomed everyone. President Margaret Reynolds led the devotions on the theme *Let the Little Children Come to Me*, aided by Ruth Kirkwood.

Guest speaker was Hugh Stewart who traveled on an exposure tour to Eastern Europe in May 2000. The people he met cling to their faith in difficult situations. He visited a country church of gypsies as well as Reformed churches in cities. Youth and children were much in evidence worshipping in well attended services. Brian Johnston, missionary, teaches music and English at the seminary in Hungary.

Elmvale Church hosted the **Barrie** Presbyterial Annual Meeting on May 23. Members were welcomed by Alma Faris and Rev. Chas. Deogratsias. Evelyn Horne, vice-president, chaired the meeting.

Devotions on the theme, *Justice*, were conducted by Marie Bates and Della Giffen of Sunnidale Corners.

The Barrie Presbyterial display, featuring photos of local WMS groups as well as scrapbooks and records from the historical table attracted viewers and created interest.

A memorial service, based on Simon Peter's conversation with Jesus in John 13: 36-14:7 was conducted by Jean McNiven.

Synodical President, June Campbell, installed the officers.

Jean Horne introduced special guest, Denise van Wissen, a nutritionist with the Presbyterian Church who works in Nicaragua. Through her slides and commentary, we learned of the problems and progress experience in her work with families.

Brockville Presbyterial met at St. Paul's, Kemptville on May 23. President

Margaret Reynolds welcomed members, and visitors Mary Moorhead, Druse Bryan and Dr. Bill Klempa.

Judy Messenger welcomed everyone to St. Paul's which is celebrating its 150th anniversary.

Bill Klempa led a Bible study on the book of Esther. A workshop on "Our Many Intelligences" enabled us to choose where our talents were best exercised. We applied this when we participated in worship from John 8:1-11, "Go and sin no more".

Lorraine Dobbie presented past president Henny Donkersteeg with an honorary life membership.

Joan Sampson and Irene Nesbitt, guest speakers, spoke on their study exposure trip to Kenya and Malawi. They visited mission projects and missionary personnel.

Peterborough Presbyterial Spring Meeting was held May 17 at St. Andrew's, Norwood. The theme was *Continuing our Journey in Faith* (Romans 8:14-17).

A 'gathering of song' was led by Jackie Kelly of Norwood accompanied by Helen King of Warkworth. The worship service was conducted by the Bowmanville group.

President Joan Smith of Port Hope welcomed everyone. Rev. Roger Millar welcomed everyone to St. Andrew's, Norwood.

A drama, "Are you ready for change" was presented by Pauline Garvey, baby Lydia from Bowmanville, Muriel Bell, Cobourg and Joan Smith.

Guest speaker in the afternoon was Kelly Foster of Norwood who told us of her many experiences with "Youth in Mission" aboard a mercy ship which provides surgeries, dental, medical and hygiene care in third world countries. Kelly and her mother Marilyn each sang a solo as well as a lovely duet.

Making a Difference in the Sudan was the theme of **Sarnia** Presbyterial Spring Rally held at Laurel-Lea St. Matthew's, Sarnia, Ontario.

Glen Pearson and Jane Roy have travelled three times to Africa to free slaves in the Sudan and have experienced first hand the civil war and its atrocities.

Glen and Jane, who help free as many slaves as possible, encourage us, as Canadians, to speak to our government and our leaders against this inhumanity.

Greetings and grace were given by Rev. Joyce Hodgson, minister of the church.

Anna Jean McCoskery, President, welcomed everyone and introduced the guest speakers. They were thanked by Sophia Jackson.

Dorothy Neal, in the meditation "Action" stated that with faith we should try to make a difference with what we have when we can. Others taking part in the closing devotions were Donna Graham and Suzanne Mater. Marilyn Shaw was the pianist.

Bruce-Grey Presbyterial "Gladys Sim Children's Rally" was held at Knox, Holstein on May 26. Eighty-five children and adults from surrounding congregations and area attended.

Rev. Pearl Vasarhelyi of Knox, Holstein called the lively group together in the sanctuary with a warm welcome and opening prayer.

Theme for the day *Living Water* (John 4:5-30, 39-42) was introduced and led by Susan Smith and Barb Clarke, Knox

College students. Assisted by "organizers" (local teens, and others) this theme continued through story-telling, singalongs, crafts and visits to park and pond.

Following a picnic lunch outside, we returned to the sanctuary for more 'living water'. Priceville Junior choir led by Rose McLaughlin, sang several selections and led in a rousing 'motion' singalong.

The freewill offering was donated to Clear Water Project in Malawi.

Huron-Perth Presbyterial was held in Goderich, the theme *Beside the Water.* The meeting began with a morning singalong, led by Verna Willows and Lois Kipfer of St. Andrew's, Stratford. The opening prayer and WMS purpose were led by second vice president, Bernice Richards, Stratford.

Mary Jane Bissett, Goderich, welcomed everyone and Eunice Bisset introduced the morning speaker. Joyce Garrick gave an interesting history of Goderich, its buildings and churches.

Afternoon devotions were given by Bev Nichol, Jan MacInnis and Ina McMillan on 'Beside the Water'.

Ida White, former missionary to India, introduced the afternoon speaker, Pauline Brown. Pauline spoke of her work in India for 50 years.

Following the offering and dedication Betty Dow, Mitchell, gave courtesies and Bernice Richards closed with prayer.

Local

The women of **St. Andrew's, Carleton** Place, ON presented an honorary life membership certificate to Margaret Parsons (photo: centre left) in recognition of her many years of dedicated service with the WMS.

The presentation was made by president Joan McDiarmid (centre right) at the Mission Awareness Sunday service.

Mr. Mac Saunders (far right) gave the pin owned by his sister, Wilma Ledgerwood, in her memory.

Rev. Hugh Jack (left) closed with prayer.

Audrey Anderson passed away on Easter Sunday, April 15, 2001 at the age of 81. She lived a dedicated life of service to her church, her family and her community.

Audrey served as elder of St. Andrew's, Barrie for 28 years, diligent in visiting nursing homes and assisting in their communion services. She was devoted to the work of the Women's Missionary Society where she received an Honorary Life membership from her local group. She served 19 years on the executive of Toronto-Kingston Synodical, as President from 1983-1985. She will be missed.

Mrs. **Lillian Beatty** of Tisdale, Saskatchewan, daughter of William and Florence Newscomb, was born on a farm at Napinka, Manitoba on November 20, 1899.

She married Earl Beatty in 1923 and lived the remainder of her life in the Tisdale area. From an early age, she was a

talented musician, contributing her ability to church, WMS and comunity events. It is reported that she played for a church service at 99 years of age.

Mrs. Beatty (shown left) passed away in Tisdale, Saskatchewan on March 3, 2001 and was laid to rest in Napinka, Manitoba. She is mourned by many cousins, nieces, nephews, and church and WMS friends.

Anniversary

Marce L. Wood WMS of St. Andrew's, Cobourg hosted a special service on Sunday March 11 celebrating its 70th Anniversary. One of the charter members of this Young Women's Evening Auxiliary formed in 1931 was Helen (Pellow) Randall, mother of Joy Randall, Taiwan.

A Life Membership was presented to Louise Baxter, a valued member of the group. Louise had visited Mzuzu, Malawi with her husband Bryan, Town Administrator of Cobourg. She thrilled us with experiences working with the women's groups during her two visits. The town of Cobourg was twinned with Mzuzu for several years during which exchange visits were made by municipal staff.

Guest was Rev. Glen Davis, Moderator of the 126th General Assembly who reminded us that congregations must encourage the youth of the church if we are to do more than just survive. A special offering was taken to help send a child to Glen Mhor Camp.

My WMS Experience - A Personal Story

by Lorna Teare

Without continuous grounding in the story, there is no purpose for the congregation, no way to inspire each person to reach out to the bad news that calls each to be a proclaimer of good news. - Loren Mead

When as a family we returned from the United States to Canada, we joined The Presbyterian Church in Canada, the church in which I had been raised. As the wife of a busy professional and the mother of young children, my free time was limited, but I did want to join an active group in the church. My mother was an active member of the Women's Missionary Society in Edmonton and no doubt that influenced me to look at the local WMS group in my new church.

There I found a wonderful group of women, strong in their faith, with an active interest in missions. They used the mission study resources each year and as I became involved, I found not only did I come to know the missionaries but also the problems of the people and the countries in which they served. The current news of those countries became of more personal interest to me as I knew and prayed for the missionaries there.

I learned more of our own Canadian Presbyterian history as we studied the pioneer missionaries who went west to work with new immigrants and aboriginal people. People like Rev. Black of Kildonan, Manitoba; the nurses and ministers who served in the Yukon during the Klondike Gold Rush; Dr. Robertson, Mission Superintendent in the west, just to name a few.

The study resources are even better now since they are written by Canadian church workers and tell of the work in which we are directly involved.

I've been greatly blessed by that decision of some years ago to join the Anna Cooper Auxiliary, WMS, Willowdale Church, Toronto:

Blessed with great fellowship and friendship.

Blessed with the widening of my Christian horizons in the world.

Blessed by knowing of sisters and brothers in partner churches throughout the world and by being able to pray intelligently for them.

Blessed by hearing our missionaries' lives, their trials and triumphs as they serve in Christ's name.

For learning with enjoyment and fun, for long lasting friendships and ongoing spiritual growth, join or form a small study group like the WMS - I highly recommend it!

Lorna Teare is the mother of four children and grandma to seven grandchildren. She is a retired pharmacist who worked the last 15 years of her career at the former Research Addiction Foundation in Toronto. She is an Elder at Willowdale Presbyterian Church, Willowdale, Ontario and Past President of the Synodical of Toronto & Kingston.

Lorna is a regular reader of the Glad Tidings on cassette tape.

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CIRCULATION NEWS

Katherine Allen
Circulation Manager

Every year I suggest ways to promote the magazine within your congregation. Do you have any suggestions for how you can promote the magazine?

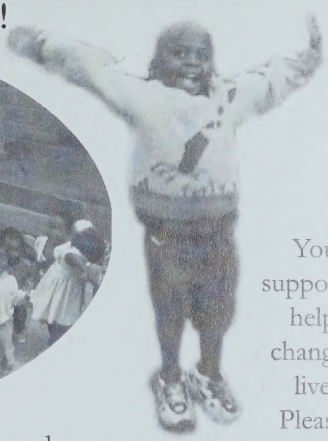
Looking back over old issues of the Glad Tidings magazine, I noticed an ad in the December 1960 issue that announces a subscription campaign. It states that the Glad Tidings is the official magazine of the WMS, well worth introducing to everyone.

Other suggestions include: placing it in hospitals and libraries; taking the magazine to shut-ins; and giving it to a friend who may not attend your church.

We can supply up to 50 copies of the Glad Tidings magazine for promotional purposes. Please contact the Glad Tidings office indicating the number of copies and name of congregation.

When sending us cheques/money orders, it is helpful to include a note specifying what the money is for i.e. name of subscriber and congregation if applicable. Sometimes we have received cheques only, and have had to find out where to direct the money. I also need this written information for my files after I forward any cheques to the WMS Financial Officer.

We can make a difference!



Every day thousands of children in Malawi are cared for in community based orphan care centers supported by PWS&D.

Your support helps change lives. Please give generously

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50 Wynford Dr. Toronto ON M3C 1J7 tel: 416-441-1111 or 1-800-619-7301
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(formerly on Council Executive)

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Varsity Acres, Calgary, AB
(Charter member of the congregation and the Presbyterian's Women's group.)

Ruth Skeoch
Knox, Goderich, ON

Mrs. Mary Freure
Knox, Guelph, ON

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Westminster, Smiths Falls, ON

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Glad Tidings

September/October 2001

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GLAD TIDINGS reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

GLAD TIDINGS challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally and internationally.

GLAD TIDINGS through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired and motivated to action.

GLAD TIDINGS provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS (WD) or by the Editor.

Written in Love

L. June Stevenson, Editor

August 2001

On being still...

Be still, and know that I am God!
Be still, and know that I am.
Be still, and know.
Be still.
Be.
Be still.
Be still, and know.
Be still, and know that I am.
Be still, and know that I am God!
- from Psalm 46:10

In July I took a writer's course at Five Oaks United Church Education & Retreat Centre near Paris, Ontario. Chapel was held for fifteen minutes every day before meals. Each time I began by focusing on emptying myself of whatever might come between me and God. Then I tried to open myself up - to be still, and to listen to what God might be saying to me.

At first my mind wandered. It helped me to concentrate by repeating the words of Psalm 46:10: *Be still, and know that I am God!* As I did this, I was gradually able to make the lines shorter and shorter until I just said, *Be.*

Be. By the last day, I was enjoying just *being*. I had slowed down enough to just *be*. No thoughts about schedules, deadlines, commitments. Just *being.*

Now, moving into September, I still retain that feeling of peace and quiet, and the ability to pause in the middle of a busy schedule and just *be.*

It's not easy. The mind is always active, and life moves around us at a brisk pace. We can all use help dealing with the push and pull of modern living. Another wonderful way for me, on the drive to and from work, is playing sacred tapes or CDs. It doesn't make the rush hour traffic go away, but it makes me feel better. A few months ago I picked up some instrumental tapes from The Book Room, then some CDs. (See my review in the Books section.) Try something like that. You may find, like I do, that your mind is more often on things of the spirit, than of the world.

The Famous 5 and Person's Day: October 18, 1929

Women Becoming Persons

Famous 5 Group Statue by Barbara Paterson of Edmonton. Thanks to The Famous 5 Foundation for making text and photos for cover and pages 4-9 available. Text has been adapted slightly to fit.

"Women are persons in matters of pains and penalties, but are not persons in matters of rights and privileges."

Canadian women, once defined by this 1876 British Common Law ruling, were unable to participate fully in public office and affairs of state. In 1916, this situation came to the attention of Judge Emily Murphy, the first female magistrate in the British Empire. Judge Murphy was the magistrate of the newly-created Women's Court in Edmonton and on her very first day, a defendant's lawyer challenged her ruling on the grounds that she was not a "person" and was therefore not able to perform the duties of a magistrate. Judge Murphy is reported to have calmly responded, noting the objection and proceeding with the sentencing. Each time this lawyer appeared before her, he repeated his objection, as did others.

Magistrate Alice Jamieson of Calgary had been similarly challenged. Finally, in 1917, one of Judge Jamieson's rulings was appealed to the Alberta Supreme Court who stated that "there is ... no legal disqualification for holding public office in the government of this country on the basis of sex." Thus the legitimacy of female judges was upheld. Women were, indeed, "persons" in the province of Alberta.

However, there was no such clarification at the federal level. Emily Murphy and others had lobbied for the appointment of a

woman to the Senate. The government's response was that according to The British North American Act, women were not "persons" and therefore were not eligible for appointment to the Senate. Prime Ministers Arthur Meighen and William Lyon MacKenzie King indicated their support for the change but the appointments did not occur.

Emily Murphy, who wanted to become Canada's first female Senator, appealed to her brother, a lawyer, and other lawyers, for guidance in resolving this matter through the courts. In 1927, her brother advised that as per Section 60 of the Supreme Court of Canada Act, any five persons could initiate an appeal for clarification of any part of The British North American Act. So she invited Henrietta Muir Edwards, Nellie McClung, Louise McKinney and Irene Parlby (the Famous 5) to join her petition.

Although the F5 had drafted three different questions, on March 14, 1928, Emily Murphy's sixtieth birthday, the Supreme Court of Canada considered this question: "Does the word 'person' in Section 24 of The British North American Act, include female 'persons'?" On April 24th, 1928, the Supreme Court said, "No, it does not."

Despite the fact that women had the right to vote in most provinces and in federal elections, the interpretation of the BNA Act was made in light of the times it was written. As well, because only male pronouns were used in the BNA Act and in England, no woman had ever been appointed to the British House of Lords, the Supreme Court said no to including women in the term 'persons.' Prime Minister King agreed to support their appeal of this ruling to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council of England, then our highest court of appeal.

"To those who would ask why the word [persons] should include females, the obvious answer is, why should it not?"

On October 18, 1929, Lord Sankey, Lord Chancellor of the Privy Council, announced the unanimous decision of the five Lords "that the exclusion of women from all public offices is a relic of days more barbarous than ours. And to those who would ask why the word [persons] should include females, the obvious answer is, why should it not?"

The Honourable Cairine Wilson became Canada's first female Senator when she was appointed in 1930. Unfortunately, none of the Famous 5 ever received this honour. Since 1929, 58 women have been appointed to the Red Chamber. As of July 2000, there are 35 women Senators sitting as part of the 104 member body, the largest number yet.

The Famous 5: Nation Builders:

Emily Murphy 1868-1933: a prominent suffragist and reformer; the first female magistrate in the Commonwealth; organizer of the 'Persons' Case; wrote books and articles under the name of Janey Canuck; first female appointed to the Edmonton Hospital Board; gathered four friends in the verandah of her Edmonton home to draft petition to Supreme Court of Canada to clarify the process to become a Senator.

Left to right: Emily Murphy, Louise McKinney, Nellie Mooney McClung, Henrietta Muir Edwards and Irene Parlby.

Characteristics: Tough, determined, no nonsense approach, unpleasant, committed, visionary, joiner, outspoken, important, domineering, proud, energetic, attentive to detail, earnest, doer. Liked hats, particularly those with large feathers (plumes) and braids.

Louise McKinney 1868-1931: organizer, staunch supporter and president of the Women's Christian Temperance Union; the first woman to serve as a Member of the Legislative Assembly in the Commonwealth when she was elected in Alberta in 1917, the first election in which women could vote or run for office; a champion for the first Dower Act in Alberta; one of four women to sign the Basis of Union, which formed the United Church of Canada.

Characteristics: Determined, organized, dedicated, outspoken. Often wore white ribbon of temperance.

Nellie Mooney McClung 1873-1951: novelist, reformer, journalist and suffragist who led the fight to enfranchise North American women, beginning with Western Canadian women in the early 1910s; Liberal MLA for Edmonton (1921-1926); first female Director of the Board of Governors of the CBC; wrote *Sowing Seeds in Danny*, her first and most popular novel; avid supporter of Women's Christian Temperance Union; the only Canadian woman on the Dominion War Council and in the delegation to the League of Nations (pre-United Nations) in 1939.

Characteristics: Often described as inspiring, feisty, impressive, dynamic, energetic, lively, optimistic, loving, kind, tremendously witty and good natured, funny. Dressed fairly stylishly. Gardener if time permitted.

Henrietta Muir Edwards 1849-1931: published Canada's first women's magazine called "Women's Work in Canada"; established the prototype for the Canadian YWCA; an artist as well as a legal expert; together with Lady Aberdeen helped found the National Council of Women (1893) and the Victorian Order of Nurses (1897); published handbooks entitled *Legal Status of Women in Canada* and *Legal Status of Women in Alberta.*

Characteristics: Caring, concerned, dedicated, imaginative, persevering, determined, independent, liberated, thoughtful. Not stylish, refused to wear corsets,

dressed for comfort, plump. Short (barely five foot), often stood on chair to make speeches. Disliked wearing hats and would remove them as soon as possible - often pushed them to the back of her head or would remove them and put them at her feet, didn't match outfits.

Irene Parlby 1868-1965: an advocate for rural women in Alberta; the first female cabinet minister in Alberta, the second in the Commonwealth (1921); delegate to the League of Nations in Geneva (1930); organized and became first president of United Farm Women's Association; appointed to University of Alberta's Board of Directors; successfully sponsored Minimum Wage for Women Act; first Woman to receive Honorary Doctorate of Law from U of A.

Characteristics: Elegant, aristocratic, inspiring, organized, charming, stylish, dedicated, energetic. Avid gardener who tended beautiful gardens - particularly flowers. Loved hats, particularly large brim hats; Wore gorgeous furs.

FAMOUS 5 SCULPTURE UNVEILED

In 1979, on the 50th anniversary of the historic decision, the Government of Canada instituted the Governor General's Persons Awards - recognizing outstanding contributions towards promoting the equality of women with courage, integrity and hard work, which the women of the Persons Case inspired. Status of Women Canada provided a list of the recipients for our ease of reference.

In Calgary, a national sculpture featuring the famous five was unveiled on October 18, 1999. Of 18 Canadian sculptors invited to submit proposals for the monuments, seven responded. Three were selected to produce maquettes. Barbara Paterson's winning sculpture depicts the five women at an imaginary moment in 1929 when they received the news of the Privy Council decision.

Little girl peeking around statue.

FAMOUS 5 COMMEMORATED IN NEW POSTAGE STAMP

The achievements of the Famous 5 were recognized in a special stamp unveiled by Canada Post. The Stamp features Nellie McClung triumphantly holding the newspaper proclaiming the 1929 Privy Council of England's decision declaring women as 'persons'.

"The Famous 5 postage stamp captures the essence of the victory of these five women as they learned of the historic ruling," said Frances Wright, Famous 5 Foundation, President and CEO. "The Famous 5 were pioneers who vigorously pursued their vision of equality. By issuing a stamp in their honour, Canada Post is immortalising the unique and significant contribution of these five nation builders and commemorating this democratic achievement."

Therese Casgrain

Passionate advocate for women's suffrage and human rights

by Maria Stam

The struggle of Canadian women to be recognized as persons, which means to be eligible to vote, was a long and bitter one. More complicated than in English Canada was the fight for women's rights in Quebec due to the opposition of the Catholic Church. One of the most outstanding Quebec women was Therese Casgrain, a tireless worker for women's causes and human rights.

Therese was born in Montreal on July 10, 1886 into a prominent family. She was strongly influenced by her father, Sir Rodolphe Forget, a member of Parliament and advocate for the improvement of living conditions of francophones. She was educated in a convent school, and in 1916 she married Pierre Casgrain, who was ten years older, and became the mother of four children.

Therese gained her first insight into politics by participating in her husband's federal election campaign as a Liberal candidate in 1917. When in 1921 he fell ill during a second election campaign, she spoke on his behalf at a public meeting. In the same year, 1921, she became actively involved in the newly founded Provincial Suffrage Association for French and English speaking women.

Quebec Premier Taschereau refused to support women's suffrage as long as he was in power (until 1936). He was supported by Cardinal Begin, Archbishop of Quebec, who wrote: "The entry of women into politics, even by merely voting, would be a misfortune for the province."

Margaret Trudeau with children at commemoration of statue on Parliament Hill.

In addition to the right to vote there were other concerns such as the low wages paid to working women and the legal position of married women. To deal with these inequal situations, the 'Provincial Suffrage Association' was changed to the 'League for Women's Right' with Therese Casgrain as its president for the next fourteen years. As a wife of an M.P. in the federal government, fluent in both languages, intelligent, and hard working, she was seen as the right choice for this position.

Beginning in 1927 the suffragists introduced year after year a women's suffrage bill in the Quebec legislature without success. It was refused thirteen times. Provincial election candidates simply

ignored the request of women for change. Finally in 1931 some recommendations became law, allowing married women control over their own wages and over the property they purchased with their earnings.

Then by 1934 women were permitted to have their own bank account. However, in general, married women still continued to be treated as minors. In 1932 Therese turned to the radio as a powerful medium to help the cause of women in rural Quebec. For the next ten years a weekly fifteen-minute program on the role of modern women, named "Feminina" was broadcast in both languages.

The Liberals were defeated by the Union National Party in 1936. Maurice Duplessis, the new premier, openly opposed women's rights. Pierre Casgrain became the speaker of the Federal House of Commons, a position which made great demands on Therese's life as a hostess for social functions. On the other hand it provided her with important political connections. The 'League of Women' sent representatives to the Liberal party convention in 1938, enabling the women to contribute to the party's resolutions and its education committee.

In the following year, after another election call, Therese and her co-workers became instrumental in the success of the campaign. When the provincial Liberals won, the new Premier Adelard Godbout, was prepared to keep the promise given earlier to the League. But the Church opposed again, afraid political suffrage would go against the unity and hierarchy of the family. Only after Premier Godbout threatened to resign, the Church withdrew resistance.

Prime Minister Jean Chretien and Governor General Adrienne Clarkson by statue on Parliament Hill.

The bill, granting women the right to vote and to become elected members of the provincial legislature, was accepted. It came into effect on January 1, 1941. Though Therese and her helpers were pleased, they decided not to disband their organization.

The wartime Prices and Trade Board asked Therese for her help to keep prices under control. She travelled throughout Quebec, the Maritimes, and part of Ontario, assisting local women's organizations to set up boards.

In 1942 she decided to run as an independent in a riding first held by her father, then by her husband. In spite of her efforts and extensive travels through the huge riding spread out over 1100 kilometres, she did not win.

After the war in 1945 the Federal Government began to provide monthly

family allowances (baby bonus). While the federal government issued the cheques in the name of the mothers, Premier Duplessis, back in power and in collaboration with the Catholic Church, arranged in Quebec that fathers would receive the family allowance.

Therese Casgrain acted immediately, arranging meetings with political and church authorities, using radio and newspapers, and writing letters to the Minister of Health and Welfare. Her efforts paid off and the mothers of Quebec received the cheques. She realized that too often political parties promoted more the interests of members and financial supporters than the interests of society as a whole. In 1946 she joined the "Cooperative Commonwealth Federation" because of the party's interest in social reform and its treatment of women as equals. She ran eight times as a CCF candidate and became the first Canadian woman to head a provincial political party from 1951 to 1957. (The CCF later became the NDP.) Quebeckers called her "Little Mother" because of her care and concern for others.

Therese's passion for social justice went beyond Quebec. In 1943 she joined a committee working on behalf of Japanese Canadians who were transported to live in the interior of B.C. After the war she fought with other members to prevent the deportation of the Japanese born in Japan. Her experiences of two World Wars convinced her that women had much to contribute to world peace.

She founded 'The Voice of Women' in 1961 and became its president. Therese, always looking for new social challenges, became one of the founders of 'The League for Human Rights,' leading the organization for three consecutive terms.

"The entry of women into politics, even by merely voting, would be a misfortune for the province."
- Cardinal Begin

Finally, in 1964 the Quebec legislature passed an act, respecting the legal capacity of married women for which she and other women had fought for twenty years. In 1967 she organized the 'Federation of Quebec Women' and in 1969 she accepted the leadership of the Quebec division of 'The Consumer Association of Canada.'

Therese Forget Casgrain's tremendous accomplishments of almost sixty years did not pass unnoticed. Among other awards, she was made a "Companion of the Order of Canada", received the "Order of the British Empire" for her wartime work on the Prices and Trade Board, was given the medal of Quebec Woman of the Century from the National Committee of Jewish Women of Canada and was awarded honourary doctoral degrees from nine universities. In 1970 she accepted a seat in the Senate. Unfortunately, her stay in the Senate lasted only nine months since she approached the retirement age of 75. She died in 1981 after almost sixty years of dedication to improve the social conditions of women.

Ref.: Therese F. Casgrain, *A Woman in a Man's World*, McClelland & Stewart Ltd., Toronto, 1972;
E. Blanche Norcross, *Pioneers Every One*, Burns & MacEachern, 1979;
Susan E Merrit, *Her Story III*, Vanwell Publishing Limited, St. Catherines, ON, 1999.

Flowers in My Garden

Flowers in my garden
Oh the wealth untold
Flowers in my garden
Red and blue and gold
Red like a setting sun
When nighttime draws near
Blue like waters deep
Cold and crystal clear
Gold like shiny pennies
Clutched in a child's small hand
Flowers bathed in water
From my watering can
When I pick a flower
And hold it to my face
I feel the wonder of God's creation
And the blessings of his grace.

Maureen Kowal

A Voice from the Unknown Shore

by Maryleah Otto

My husband's love of sailing was a lifelong source of pleasure and recreation for him. It also cost him his life. An accident in the Caribbean resulted in his being forever "lost at sea". I remember the shock, the disbelief and the anger I felt during those awful days when I waited for news.

I fantasized about the ways Steve might still be alive. Perhaps he was picked up by a passing ship with a non-English-speaking crew, or washed ashore on an uninhabited island. Maybe he was a victim of amnesia. Or held hostage by drug runners who were known to ply their illegal trade in those waters. But slowly, reluctantly, my brain accepted the truth: my husband was dead. And no, there was no body to bury.

Then one morning a letter arrived from a good friend. In it she enclosed a poem that she had noticed in a newspaper. It was anonymous but when I read it I knew instantly that God must surely want me to hear the words of this unknown writer.

I read the lines with mounting awe. The description of the setting, the sailboat, the skipper - it was all eerily familiar. It was as though Steve had written the words himself! And the ending! - so reassuring, so comforting. The void that had filled my whole being since I first had news of the accident was transformed into a sense of peace.

Several months later when our family

held a memorial service for my husband, I asked our minister to read the lovely poem. Hearing the now familiar words echoing through the church, I knew that closure was finally being achieved. Silently I whispered, "Thank you, Lord. Thank you for letting Steve bid me farewell. And thank you for reminding me that he and I will surely cruise together once again on the other shore."

Ever curious to know the author of this poem, I searched the poetry indices in the public library and discovered that the writer is unknown although the words are sometimes attributed to a mid-nineteenth century woman called Elizabeth Clark Hardy. I'd like to share the poem with you now.

Sometime at Eve

Sometime at eve, when the tide is low,
I shall slip my mooring and sail away
With no responses to the friendly hail
Of kindred craft in the busy bay.
In the silent hush of the twilight pale
When the night stoops down to embrace the day
And the voices call in the water's flow
Sometime at eve, when the tide is low
I shall slip my mooring and sail away.

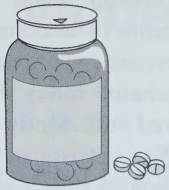
Through the purpling shadows that darkly trail
O'er the ebbing tide of the unknown sea
I shall fare me away, with a dip of sail
And a ripple of water to tell the tale
Of a lonely voyager, sailing away
To the mystic isles where at anchor lay
The crafts of those who have sailed before
O'er the unknown sea, to the unknown shore.

A few who have watched me sail away
Will miss my craft from the busy bay
Some friendly barks that were anchored near
Some loving souls that my heart held dear
In silent sorrow will drop a tear -
But I shall have peacefully furled my sail
In mooring sheltered from storm or gale,
And greeted friends who have sailed before
O'er the unknown sea to the unknown shore.

Author Unknown

Hard Things

by Linda Wegner



"I would have lost heart unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." **Psalm 27:13**

Cancer doesn't come softly from our lips. Formed in the recesses of our mouth, the phonetically "hard C" is propelled forward after the tongue makes contact with the soft palette and an explosion of sound is created. No gentle voicing of this demon for even its origin is harsh.

Embracing the harshness of cancer comes easily because we collide with it daily. We bang our heads against unyielding barriers and stumble against immoveable roadblocks. We sometimes shake our fists and wonder at heaven's seeming inflexibility. Life, if it ever were easy, is now hard.

While cancer is always hard, cancer without hope is difficult beyond comprehension. Without mercy, hopelessness declares there is no substance to those things for which we long, no evidence of anything beyond what we see.

"My soul weeps because of grief,"* the psalmist lamented, and we understand for we know all about weeping.

"Why do you hide Yourself?" he demands, "Why is it that You absent Yourself in my times of trouble?"*, and we pick up the interrogation, aching to know where He is when we need Him as never before. Even the horror of our disease cannot equal the pain of hopelessness.

To the one gripped by despair, pious exhortations to read more, pray more or believe more, fall like hammer blows on an already pulverized heart. God knows that if we could, we would! It is as if the means of hope are themselves beyond hope.

For me, cancer brought with it a dulling of the mind. Narcotics provided not only blessed escape from pain, they brought with them the curse of mental fragility. Letters and spaces, even when they managed to form themselves into words, escaped comprehension. Once-familiar psalms of comfort seemed muddled as I attempted to beat back the effects of deadly drugs on my brain. Prayer consisted of sometimes incoherent offerings of tears while worship became mantra-like in its starkness.

In times like that, it's easy to forget that God is there, difficult to remember that His promises are new every morning. The psalmist David knew well the combination of hard things and uncertainty, knew intimately the struggle to regain hope in times of despair. We identify easily with his words when our days are filled with hard things, uncertain things and things encased in lost hope.

"I would have lost heart," he said, "unless..."

The journey through cancer is marked by this conjunction of uncertainty; our every action becomes conditional. We are scheduled for chemo today *unless* we haven't recovered sufficiently from the last onslaught. We can take part in a long-anticipated celebration *unless* we are too weak. We are well *unless* the disease returns. Oh, David, we understand for we, too, struggle with despair. Unless feels like the end.

"How can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?" intoned David in another time and another hard place. And how can we sing, we say, when it is as if our tongues cling to the roof of our mouths from despair?

But for David, unless was the beginning, not the end. Out of the inner recesses of his being he threw the crushing weight of his circumstances upon his God and in doing so, he touched His heart, and produced the sounds of faith. From the place of harshness, comfort flowed; from despair, courage.

"I believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord," he sang, "in the land of the living."

It is now, in the land of our living, that we need hope. Dying takes care of itself when hope carries us.

To be carried requires no condition but to relinquish our weight to another; to sing demands no instrument but our own. Hope, then, issues from our hearts and is propelled from our voices when we simply abandon ourselves to the God of all comfort.

To sing in our captivity is the beauty of hope; to be carried in hard times is its promise.

*paraphrased

GOD AND THE CANCER PATIENT

Looking for...people interested in completing a 15-question form about devotional guides directed to cancer sufferers, their families or healthcare professionals/caregivers. The purpose is to gather information as to where they found spiritual help.

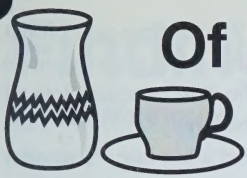
If you are interested in contributing to this study, please contact Linda Wegner at your earliest convenience.

linda.g.wegner@home.com
www.lindawegner.com
306-668-3945

From a High Window

Could I ask for greater grandeur
In the heaven of the skies?
Could I ask for deeper beauties
Upon which to feast my eyes?
Could I ask - O God - not asking
But rejoicing, giving praise
For the breathless sweep of buildings
Seen through the morning haze;
For the lavender and silver
On the river's gleaming breast,
And the lovely arcs the seagulls make
Before they come to rest.

Marion Smith



Of Much More Value

by Victoria Stirling

Nellie Burns sighed. "It's so hard. Everything I've got has a special memory attached to it. I don't want to part with any of my things."

Nellie, in her early eighties, was unable to care for herself so she had sold her home, and was moving into a retirement residence. At first she had strongly denied that she needed to make this move, but she finally agreed that it was for the best. She and her friend Janet were sorting through some of her possessions.

"Look at this." Nellie said. "My sister gave me this vase several years ago. It's the only thing I have left to remember her by." She held it for a moment close to her cheek.

Janet carefully took the delicate piece of glass from Nellie. She wrapped it and placed it in the box that would be going with her friend to her new home.

"I do understand why you would want to keep that, but you've really got to start cutting back on some of this other stuff," Janet said. She lifted up several large ornaments. "You know you can't take everything with you. And, anyway, what would you need these for?"

Tears filled Nellie's blue eyes, and began to trickle down her lined cheeks.

Janet leaned across and tenderly wiped Nellie's face with a tissue. "My dear friend, I know that this must very hard for you to do, and it saddens me to see you so unhappy." Janet placed her arm around Nellie.

"But, what if you begin by remembering that you are of much more value than any of these things. Does that help to make it any easier?"

Nellie nodded. "Yes, I guess it does help a little. I know the Bible tells us that we shouldn't store up riches here on earth, where moths and rust destroy and robbers can break in and steal. We should think more of our heavenly treasures."

"That's so right." Janet said, giving Nellie a hug. "We hang onto lots of things while we're here, and often we don't need them; we just *want* them." She smiled. "The sad part is that we don't realize this until we have to start cutting back on what we've accumulated over the years."

"I see what you mean," Nellie said. "I've got to reduce the amount of belongings I want to keep. It's just stuff anyway."

"You are right." Janet said. "It is just stuff. A lot of the goods you owned and used in a house, you'll never need in a retirement home." Janet gave her a playful pat. "There's an extra bonus: you won't have to worry about keeping them all clean either."

Nellie chuckled. "Yes, I guess that's true." She turned and started to pick out several items from the different piles that lay at her feet. After a glance at them she quickly placed them in a box to be given away, sold, or taken with her.

"I know deep in my heart what you're saying is the truth," Nellie said. "I'm much more important to God than any of my possessions, but it's still not easy."

She shook her head. Anyway, all my memories are locked in here." Nellie

touched her grey tousled head. "And, it doesn't matter where I go; they will always be a part of me."

Janet gave Nellie another hug. "Absolutely! And, try to think of this as just the end of one period of your life and the beginning of another. With God's help Nellie, it will be as adventurous and exciting as the first part."

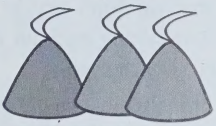
Soon they had everything sorted out. Nellie looked around at the small number of articles she had put aside to take with her. She was quiet for a few minutes then she said, "I'm amazed at how little I've put in the box that I want to keep." She looked pensive, and added. "What does that tell me about all my other belongings?"

Janet smiled. "At one time you probably needed them, but now you've discovered that you don't require lots of material things to be happy."

Nellie gave Janet a big hug. "I wonder why that truth so often escapes us when we're younger?"

"I don't know," Janet said. "But I do know that I've learned a valuable lesson today myself, helping you. I'm going to make a start on getting rid of some of my unnecessary paraphernalia, and also cut back on buying things I don't really need."

Nellie smiled, and squeezed Janet's hand. "Oh my! God does indeed move in mysterious ways. Today we've both rediscovered the truth of his divine wisdom."



Passing Love Around

An idea for favours at a dinner or group meeting. Or, take some to give with Meals on Wheels, and so on. Thanks to Margaret Reynolds of Morrisburg for sharing this idea.

Essentials to Help You Remember to be a Friend Always

Fill a small baggie with the following items. Put a copy of what each item means in the bag.

A mint: To remind you that you are worth a mint to your family and friends.

A button: To remind you to "button your lips" to keep from saying things about others.

A tissue: To remind you to dry someone's tears (or perhaps your own), so you can see the tears of others.

A candy kiss: To remind you that everyone needs to be treated occasionally.

A toothpick: To remind you to "pick out" the good qualities of everyone.

A Band-Aid: To remind you of healing hurt feelings, yours or someone else's.

A lifesaver: To remind you of Jesus as your "lifesaver".

A gold thread: To remind you that friendship is the golden thread that ties together the hearts of everyone.

Finding the Gift

by Gail Northgrave

"Please pray for my brother," sighed Theresa, "he has been on life supports for two weeks due to a severe car accident."

I promised to pray. Yet, two days later she called to tell me he had died.

Thirty years previous, while in my teenage years, a similar instance had happened. Upon returning from a walk with his parents, Terry my two-year-old nephew was given a cup of hot chocolate. As he went to put the empty mug on the table he tripped and fell. The cup broke, cutting his hand deeply enough to receive stitches. During the medical procedure he stopped breathing.

When she heard the news, my mom left to be with my sister. Since I earnestly believed the teachings I had learned about miracles through intercessory prayer and the use of blessed medals, I handed my mom a tiny cross, "Pin this to Terry's shirt and he will be okay."

However, while a tracheotomy was being performed, Terry's heart stopped. They were unable to resuscitate him.

I never expressed my feelings or asked anyone questions. They just got buried like little Terry's body. Now, this morning I was reliving those same defeated feelings. Once again my prayers for healing had been futile.

Fortunately however, now I am not afraid to speak of my feelings and to ask questions.

"Do you ever feel like a failure at prayer?", I asked a close friend.

"Definitely," agreed Elizabeth, "I have been praying for Jason's healing from schizophrenia for twenty years but I will not give up."

Our daughter Nancy, an enthusiastic Christian, is always looking for "the gift" in every tragedy. Her "gift" philosophy reminds me of a story about two ten-year-old boys. Dave, born into a wealthy family, sports a pessimistic attitude, while Dan, whose family battles poverty, approaches life optimistically.

On Dave's tenth birthday he received a new computer and tickets to Disney World, as well as many other gifts for which he had asked. Still he was not pleased.

Although dreamer Dan desperately wanted a pony, he expressed genuine gratitude upon opening his one birthday gift which contained a new baseball glove. Still believing that one day he would get his pony, he headed for the barn to commence the morning chores. When he unlatched the barn door he was greeted with a huge pile of manure. Feverishly be began shoveling through it.

A few moments later his dad joined him, "How did this get here and what are you doing?", he asked.

Excitedly Danny replied, "I don't know how it got here, but I do know that with this amount of manure there must a pony in here somewhere."

A few years ago while working as a temporary medical secretary, I continued my search for a permanent part-time position. Since my working skills are very

Looking for the gift when we are met with one of life's manure piles takes a lot of trust.

versatile, I sent out a variety of résumés, one of which was to a pharmacy. When I received the call for a second interview, my hopes zoomed skyward.

"I'm placing you at the top of my list, but I still have one more person to interview," said Dick, the manager as he accompanied me to the door. "I'll call you tomorrow."

Tomorrow came and went. The expected phone call never came. Apprehensively, I picked up the phone and called to inquire about the position.

"I apologize, I have not had time to call you", stated Dick, "but a woman who previously worked here walked in just after you left and wanted to be rehired. I gave her the job as she already knows it."

It took two days, and a conscious decision to trust that God had the perfect job already planned for me, to pull myself out of my doldrums.

The resolve to trust guarantees me that there is no such thing as "failed prayer" requests. Whatever the circumstance, be it our families, finances or health, our part is to pray. Prayer is our 911 which places God on the scene of life's happenings. Only then can we be reassured that God's gifts of love will bring about the best possible outcome for all involved.

Fall

The world ablaze
With colours, gold
And red the leaves,
The soil so warm
With leaves and mould.
The sky
A sparkling hue of blue,
The silver sun is shining.
The air still warm
and loaded
with unspent energy.
And yet, it is Fall.
My garden
though there are
many flowers yet
Seems like a slept in bed,
The bending flowers
bleary eyed seem to cry
"Please let us die."

Lini Richarda Grol

"TIME TO . . ."

(Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8)

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

A Puzzle
by Jim Phillips

W	A	R	E	F	R	A	I	N
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AWAY
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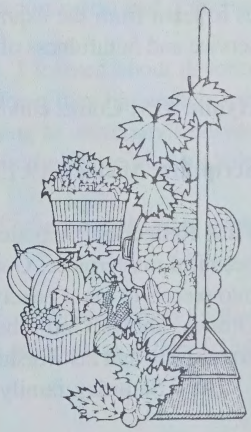
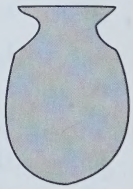


Thanksgiving for God's Children A Service to Celebrate Youth and Children

by Colleen Smith

Preparation: Have ready small pieces of paper, plain or cut into shapes i.e. of pottery vases (see under offering).

We are all God's children. Called by God, and crafted into God's beautiful masterpieces. Within this service, I invite you to celebrate and thank God for the younger members of our churches. I also encourage you to share your own stories of how God is working in your life. Take time for this during the offering, following the service or in future times together.



Call to Worship:

One: God, like the potter forms the clay,
All: you have formed each one of us.
One: You have made each of us unique,
All: with our own gifts, talents and resources.
One: You call both young and old, working as a potter in our lives
All: We thank you for your presence with us and with the youth of our congregations. Be with us now in this time of celebration and thanksgiving.

Opening Prayer:
Loving God, as we gather in your name, we thank you for your presence among us. Help us to learn from the examples of others, especially those given through the excitement, service and faithfulness of our youth. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Hymn: #251 Come, children join to sing (1972 B of P or #377 in the 1997 B of P)

Scripture: Matthew 19:13-15

First Reflection: A potter starts with a slab of clay and works to turn that slab into a beautiful masterpiece. God works in our lives in a similar way, working to turn our lives into pieceS of great beauty. **Hamish**, a young boy from St. Giles Presbyterian Church in Ottawa, shows God's beauty often in his life. Hamish does everything with great enthusiasm and his worship of God is no exception.

At a Saturday family service, we had chosen to sing *Lord of the Dance*. When I

looked out over the congregation, I spied Hamish. Hamish had taken the words to heart, and was dancing in the aisle. In the safety of God's house, his worship was a beautiful masterpiece. It helped to inspire me to worship God more fully, and to live life with the exuberance of a child.

Response: We thank you Lord for the children of our congregations. We thank you for your presence in their lives, allowing their beauty and enthusiasm to minister to others. Continue to be with them, moulding them and shaping them into your beautiful masterpieces.

Chorus: #475 I am the Church. You are the Church (1997 B of P, sing the chorus only) or #302 The church is wherever God's people (1972 B of P, sing verse 2)

Scripture: 1 John 3:18-24

Second Reflection: Dianne Oliphant is a high school student who attends New St. James Church in London, Ontario. Here she shares some reflections on past mission trips in which she has participated. She has visited Guatemala twice with her local church; and has participated in Youth in Mission trips to Nicaragua and Cuba. Through these experiences, God's hand continues to mould and shape Dianne.

I am thankful for all the wonderful life-changing experiences I have had. I am thankful for being able to see the world as it truly is for so many people. I am thankful for the learning experiences I received from the people I met in the developing countries I visited. From the people I met, I learned that family is very important and that living simply brings so much more happiness than wanting excess. These people didn't have much, but they were the richest people I have ever met because they were happy with what they had, and truly enjoyed the simple things in life.

I also learned from those I traveled with. I learned different ways of viewing the world and religion. I heard many ideas about God and mission work, and it encouraged me to open my mind and think differently.

Lastly, from the mission staff I met in these countries, I learned about devotion and passion. These people were so selfless and gave everything they had to help others. They inspired me to do the same with my life. I am going to university next year to begin a degree in International Development and I hope in the future to work helping others.

I am thankful that I can make a difference in the lives of others and that it is possible for my dreams to come true.

Response: We thank you Lord for the youth in our congregations. We thank you for their dreams and their willingness to serve others. Be with them and guide them as they follow their dreams.

Chorus: #475 I am the Church. You are the Church (1997 B of P, sing the chorus only) or #302 The church is wherever God's people (1972 B of P, sing verse 2)

Scripture: 1 Timothy 4:12-14

Third Reflection: There is much work to do in our own communities. During the summer of 2000, 40 young adults joined together to make a difference within the Niagara region. These participants were part of Canada Youth 2000, but had a unique experience as members of the Mission Track. Each day they participated in a different mission project, before joining the entire community of Canada Youth 2000 for worship in the evening.

They spent a warm summer's day clearing brush, gardening and painting at Crieff Hill Conference Centre. They worked at a soup kitchen, visited seniors, and built sheds for Habitat for Humanity. They bundled care packages for the homeless and did landscaping at a low-income housing project. The energy of this group amazed the organizations that received them. They were excited to serve and willing to give of themselves. They saw God using them at the conference, and were excited that God would continue to use them when they returned home to their own communities.

Response: We thank you Lord for the young adults within our congregations. They serve in so many ways: on committees, in faithful prayer, in food preparation, in their vocation, singing in choirs, cleaning the church, visiting the lonely, knitting for those in need, and teaching Sunday School. We thank you for all the ways in which they serve.

Chorus: #475 I am the Church. You are the Church (1997 B of P, sing the chorus only) or #302 The church is wherever God's people (1972 B of P, sing verse 2)

Offering of Thanksgiving and Offering of Our Gifts:
As we offer our gifts to God, take a minute to reflect on how God is moulding and using you. Consider how you are presently serving God, or how you may be called to serve in the future.

On the paper that is being distributed, write down your offerings of self - ways in which you are being called by God to serve as God crafts you into God's masterpiece. Place these along with your financial offerings on or into the offering plate. (A pottery plate or vase can be used to collect these offerings.)

Offertory Prayer: Living God, we thank you for the blessings you have given us, and for this opportunity to give back. Help us to give back to you with our whole selves. May we use the gifts and talents you are creating in us to make a difference in the lives of others. Also, bless our financial offerings, so that they can be used to glorify you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Hymn: #42 All people that on earth do dwell (1972 B of P, #65 from 1997 B of P) or #472 We are God's people (from 1997 B of P)

Closing Prayer:

One: Holy God, we thank you for the children within our church families.

ALL: We lift our prayers of thanksgiving for our children.

One: In this time of silent prayer we remember the children of our congregations. - silence -

Holy God, we thank you for the youth within our church families.

ALL: We lift our prayers of thanksgiving for our youth.

One: In this time of silent prayer we remember the youth of our congregations. - silence -

Holy God, we thank you for the young adults within our church families.

ALL: We lift our prayers of thanksgiving for our young adults.

One: In this time of silent prayer we remember the young adults of our congregations. - silence -

Thank you for the children, youth and young adults who are present in our church families. May you continue to be present in their lives.

ALL: May we receive ministry from them,

One: and may we use the gifts and talents you craft in us to minister to them.

ALL: Amen.

Colleen Smith has recently been appointed Synod Youth Consultant in the Synod of Toronto/ Kingston. Prior to that she was working with Youth in Mission.

WANTED!

Volunteers of all ages, with and without construction experience, from all across Canada to work with families in need to help build their first safe, decent, affordable home.

Must be willing to get sore, tired muscles plus have a lot of fun!

Celebrate the International Year of the Volunteer by coming out to a Habitat for Humanity build.

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Email: habitat@habitat.ca
www.habitat.ca

Program

Margaret Robertson
Program Secretary

Daring

Developed from a Devotion and Study written by Gerry Bergeron and used by the Kamloops WMS in 2000 to ease their way back into mission activities in the fall.

Leader: *I dare you! You wouldn't dare! Don't you dare!* How many of us have heard phrases like these directed at us in recent years? They are usually associated with youthful exuberance in attempting something risky, either physical or social. But, what about ethical dares? Listen to an old, but familiar story. It concerns a good man who dared to stick to his beliefs in the face of powerful enemies.

Scripture: Daniel 6: 1-23

Leader: How many people today are willing to put everything on the line for their beliefs? We face this type of dare every day when we make ethical choices about our behaviours. Do we keep quiet when we see an injustice? Do we look the other way when we see something that needs doing, or when we see a minor crime being committed? Do we witness for our beliefs when others ridicule "religions"? These are all examples of ethical dares. Can you think of other similar situations? (PAUSE) We should try to recognize these when they occur in our lives and meet them in a way that reflects our spiritual courage just as Daniel did.

Hymn: #773 Standing by a purpose true (1918 Book of Praise) or #484 I'm not ashamed to own my Lord (1972); or #480 Who is on the Lord's side? (1972)

Prayer: Creator God, help us to dare to live in a way acceptable to you. Give us the strength and dedication to answer the ethical challenges or 'dares' we are faced with in life. Provide us with the wisdom to recognize when our choices are in accordance with your wishes, and are not just an extension of a stubbornly held, perhaps incorrect, point of view. And then, O Lord, grant us the assurance of a Daniel, that we are doing the right thing in the face of opposition. We ask this in Christ's name. Amen.

What are the challenges in your life today?

Challenges:

Discuss what it means to challenge. Some definitions for the verb include to "dare" with a sub-definition of "defiance". Others are to invite to play a game or accept a match; to call into account and to demand as a right; to call into question truths, statements, rights, authority, etc. such as is used in court proceedings.

Leader: For discussion purposes we will use the definition "to call forth and test someone's qualities." Individuals or groups are often challenged by others. Challenges require responses. These can be practical or spiritual.

Following are some challenge situations from the Old and New Testaments. Divide into six groups. Read scriptures. What were their challenges and responses?

Choose one or more CHALLENGE to discuss:

1. Seeing God's Hand at Work: Ruth 1:16-17; Acts 10: 34-43.

2. Faith in Life: 1 Samuel 17: 45-47; 2 Kings 2:6-14; 2 Kings 5:9-15; Luke 7:1-10; Luke 8:40-56.

3. God's Grace and Righteousness: Isaiah 6:7-8; Romans 5:1-11.

4. Humility/Servanthood: John 13:4-17; 1 Corinthians 3:1-9.

5. Living the Christian Life Inside/Outside the Christian Community: Luke 10:25-37; Acts 2:43-47 and Acts 4:32-37; Colossians 3:8-17.

6. Proclamation: Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 4:5-20.

Leader: Challenges require responses, practical or spiritual. Challenges are opportunities to recognize situations and to make proposals for change or improvement.

Consider what qualities we, as individuals and as WMS groups, have to handle different situations. Ask if we are utilizing everything we have available. (When you are considering the following, keep in mind the sample challenges as guidelines to approach these topics.)

Where and what are the challenges? Are we meeting them? Are there untapped resources in our group/congregation that we could be using? How can the WMS become involved, or if already involved, how could participation be increased?

Areas to Consider

Personal Relationships
Congregation
Community
National Church or WMS projects
International Missions/ PWS&D

Hymn: #587 Called as partners in Christ's service or #635 Brother, sister let me serve you (1997 Book of Praise)

Prayer: Loving Father, prepare us and give us strength to see the challenges we face as opportunities, as chances to re-assess or improve things in our mission lives. We ask for guidance for the new season in our work. Especially we ask you to open our minds to the lessons of the study material on which we are about to start. We ask this in Christ's name. Amen

ALONG THE TIMBER LINE

"Delightfully Different!" The twelve chapters of this book by Rev. Bill Moody portray the church pews, Jack Pine, Mary Maple, Oscar Oak, Sally Spruce and others discussing such pertinent matters as - Why Go to Church? - A Broken Nose! - Say It With Music - Money Talks - It's in the Book - Take Me to Your Leader - The Other Rib! Send $5.95, plus $1.60 for mailing, to Rev. W. H. Moody, 413 - 3097 Palmer Drive, Burlington, ON L7M 4G8.

Who Cares?

(Psalm 142*)

I cried, "Oh Lord, please help me.
Please come and rescue me.
My enemy is waiting.
He's set a snare for me."

My spirit is so troubled.
My friends have fled away,
I looked around for refuge -
A place my head to lay.

There was no one to help me.
There was no one to care.
I turned to God my Saviour.
He heard my desperate prayer.

My foe may still be present -
And stronger, far, than I -
Yet I'm no longer frightened,
For God, the Lord, is nigh.

He's wrapped His arms around me
In him I now can hide.
I'll ever sing His praises.
For he will be my guide.

Helen Dowd

*David's prayer from his cave. (See also 1 Samuel 22:1)

WMS EXECUTIVE SECRETARY APPOINTED

Sarah Kim

The Women's Missionary Society is pleased to announce that the search for an Executive Secretary is over. As of September 1, 2001 Yong Mi (Sarah) Kim will begin her work as Executive Secretary.

Rev. Sarah Kim was born in Seoul, Korea and immigrated to Canada with her family in 1968. She attended Don Mills Collegiate in Toronto, University of Toronto and graduated from Knox College in 1994 with a Master of Divinity. For continuing education, Sarah took a course with John Savage (Alban Institute) in Conflict Resolution.

Since her ordination Sarah has been minister at Albion Gardens Presbyterian Church in Etobicoke. She lives in Mississauga with her husband, Rev. In Kee Kim, son Joshua, age 17 and daughter Grace, age 13. Sarah's other interests include classical music and skating.

The thought of being involved in Christ's mission in whatever shape or form has always excited Sarah. She felt that God was using her as a missionary in Albion Gardens, and that now God is leading her to serve as Executive Secretary of the WMS.

"I look forward to working within the WMS at the national level, especially because I have always regarded the WMS as a group that had the mission of Christ at the centre of its mandate, at the centre of its heart. Knowing this," Sarah says, "I am excited at the prospect of being a part of the developing and on-going work of the WMS."

The Society welcomes Sarah and looks forward to working with her.

A Prayer

Dear Lord, the mystery of your being is beyond our comprehension; how to explain that you know each one of the billions of us, intimately? And the secret dawns. You are a spirit within each of us. Sometimes that secret remains locked.

What a tragedy! We only have to knock on that door, confess our need for you, our helplessness, our sin. We must believe that you loved us so much, that you gave us your own Son who personified you. Jesus, who took our sin upon himself; Jesus, who died for us. Truly, had to believe!

And yet, when we take that leap of faith, God opens that door. God encompasses us with love and forgiveness that is so divine that we are transformed. No more fears or doubts. The wonder of it all.

M. G. Wincott

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The Book Room has a variety of audio cassettes and CDs that make wonderful gifts to give yourself or someone you care for. The first time I saw the Joysong series, I bought one of each on the spot, two for gifts, and two for myself. A friend liked mine so much, she bought one from me for her vacation.

The Joysong series consists of instrumental hymns, beautifully arranged and performed. Each CD or tape contains well-known and well-loved hymns, that you can sing along with in your car or around the house. They make the driving and the housework more enjoyable. They could be used at meetings when an accompanist is unavailable.

Each one uses different instruments: cello, classical piano, harp and strings, saxophone and Celtic sounds. Also available are vocal hymnstyles featuring 'kids sing hymns,' 'down home gospel' and 'country church'. A classical occasions series organizes classical music by mood: candlelight, dreams, romance, and so on.

Some of the CDs come with a bonus, a book featuring scripture, poetry and inspiring thoughts about the hymns on the CD. What lovely gifts for your minister or Christian Education worker, a shut-in, a senior, everyone on your list!

The best surprise of all is the price. Some CDs sell for as low as $7.79 and tapes for $6.49. And these are Canadian prices! The series with books included are $15.95. Consult The Book Room for titles and prices. Start your Christmas shopping early this year!

L. June Stevenson

When Love Hurts: A Women's Guide to Understanding Abuse in Relationships by Jill Corey and Karen McAndless-Davis. WomenKind Press. $17.95

"How can you make sense of a hurtful relationship?" This book includes check lists compiled from actual experiences of many women who have been helped in workshops conducted by the authors.

Dr. Mary Russell, Professor of Social Work, University of B.C. notes, "This book will take you through exercises to help you make decisions about your life and gain greater control for your seemingly uncontrollable situations."

Included are definitions of what abuse

is and the cycle which happens in Honeymoon, Tension and Explosion stages. Even the definition immensely to clear the confusion that is generated by this behaviour.

How to access good support services for immediate help and for planning for the future with the relationship, or otherwise, if necessary. Thought is given to the welfare of children involved. Dr. Russell, "This is an excellent resource not only for women to use on their own but also for counselors and advocates."

We cannot deny the almost desperate need for this very practical and timely book as the media reports on the ultimate results of abuse. The problem cuts across all ages and all classes of society, including those within the Christian church.

From readers: "Reading this book has been like opening a window in a dark room. I see things I didn't see before. I feel I have options now." "This book has been a wonderful guide for me. The authors are extremely knowledgeable and compassionate. I learned so much." "When Love Hurts was a lifesaver!"

June Campbell

Talent

How blessed it is to have a talent,
Something you really love to do.
It is like a gift from heaven sent
That is meant only for you.

Jenny Schulze

Forward in Faith

As I write this Forward in Faith column for the September/October issue of the Glad Tidings, I am aware that we have just passed the halfway mark of 2001. As Treasurer, my thoughts turn to our Budget for the year and I wonder how we have fared to date.

On checking, I find that to the end of June our income from all sources amounted to $380,976; $248,203 of which was received from our presbyterials. Expenditures for Administration, Mission Education and Grants, which are ongoing, for the same period amounted to $459,273. You will recall that our approved Budget for 2001 is $1,079,000.

It would be most helpful if our Treasurers across the Society were to submit their contributions each month. We would be very grateful if this were a regular practice with regard to presbyterial offerings.

As we think of our budget, we are reminded of the treasurers of our almost five hundred auxiliaries and affiliated groups across the Western Division. We would express our sincere appreciation to them for their faithfulness in carrying out their duties. "Well done, good and faithful servant!" (Matthew 25: 21).

Giollo Kelly, Treasurer

Honorary Memberships - 2000

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Kelowna, BC

Pat Foulston
Medicine Hat, AB

Maureen McNerney
Calgary, AB

Muriel Allen
Hanover, ON

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Tiverton, ON

Margaret Jean Hutton
Glammis, ON

Muriel Neilson
Margaret Underwood
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Sarah McDonald
Iola Veale
Irene Whitfield
Woodville, ON

David Kilgour, Jr.
Helen Lee
Ottawa, ON

"Earth on the Edge", a TV presentation by Bill Moyers disturbed me greatly. Our globe is in a precarious situation. The water situation alone has been front and centre for some time now, not only in Canada but all over the world. Shortages, impurities, indiscriminate waste, damming of rivers and changing their courses, human waste poisoning sources and wells, and greed for profit in the sale of water, has teamed up with nature's changes to point to potential disaster.

Water is life. Without it this earth would be desolate and lifeless. Water sustains our physical life, cleanses us and gives pleasure to our senses. Without rain, there would be no growth of the plants that supply our food. God has given us the wonderful gift of rain to water the earth, make it productive and continually replenish the lakes and rivers.

Most people have only to turn on a tap and with so little effort, receive an adequate supply of good water. People of other countries, not so fortunate, must often seek new sources. They walk long distances daily to obtain it and then transport the precious liquid back to their dwellings. It is often contaminated and causes illness and death. We take our supply for granted and use it freely and carelessly.

Isaiah 12: 2-3 turned my thoughts to wells. They are one of the sources of water for many. If kept clean, a good well gives clear, sweet, pure cold water in a steady supply. Here we are instructed "with joy to draw water from the wells of salvation". Obviously not literal wells are meant. The Scripture states "God is our salvation" and the picture is of the vast inexhaustible supply God has provided. Through the Lord Jesus Christ, He has redeemed our soul, delivered us from sin and its consequences, and made Heaven our destiny. To draw from this well brings and sustains spiritual life. We draw with joy because trusting the gift of Salvation banishes all fear, for God is our strength and song. We are His children.

How wonderful that the Word says "wells." Not just one, no waiting your turn to draw, no journeys to reach it and no container to carry. "Jesus said, 'that the water he gives will become in us a well of water springing up into everlasting life.'" John 4: 14b. This is like an "artesian well", constantly flowing, never failing and more than enough to share with others.

By reading the Word, by praying and through obeying, you can keep the water from being muddied by sin. People are thirsty. Give them drink from your well, with joy.

E. Jean Abrams, Cobourg, Ontario

One Word

One word
I yearn to write
One place
I yearn to write.
Jesus is the word
on
Every human heart.

Gail Northgrave

MISSION IN ACTION

Margaret Vanderzweerde
India

2001 - Jake and I arrived at Nagpur and were billeted at the CNI training center for Human Potential Development. The Coordinator Mr. Sudipta Singh received us. This visit introduced me to a variety of programs and I found the visit most beneficial.

A special one-month program was in session with 22 participants of which four were women. The program is "Revisioning for Mission" and I have been able to share and interact with many of the participants, who are from all over India and in leadership positions in their sending Dioceses. Several of them are young pastors.

It is a program which is beneficial not only for themselves but also for participants and/or observers from other denominations and/or countries.

Jake and I also visited several villages where the Church is active in programs, especially with women and children. Mr. S. Thangavel and his daughter Shona took us there. With us were four Korean youth that are here, together with five others, for a six-month volunteer work term.

One of the villages, Tumsar, is a Ministry to Children program. This program is geared mainly to the children who are enrolled in school. Many children become dropouts for a variety of reasons. They all come from poor homes, with mostly illiterate parents, so there is no one to assist them with homework. They are often required to do chores after school, and they are mostly hungry. They easily become discouraged and drop out. The program targets these youngsters through after-school programs. They are fed a nutritious meal, helped with schoolwork and taught "life skills" appropriate for their situation and condition.

I was able to challenge the parents to encourage their children by making sure they attend school regularly and to give them the opportunity to attend after-school programs.

As a result the village "head" publicly stated that he was challenging the children to a contest. He would buy a set of new clothes for the best students in several levels.

Another program we visited was at "Shramdeep," a training center envisioned by the late Bishop Vinod Peter, and opened by him just last year. It targets tribals, village and urban slum illiterates and semi-illiterates. They only are admitted for training.

The project had initially been approved by EZE, at whose expense a beautiful new building was erected. The Director Mr. Anil Jonathan invited us to the program and we were encouraged by what was happening.

In this city of about 2.8 million people 40% are slum residents living below poverty levels. Among these (40%) one million people over 100,000 are child labourers and over 400,000 illiterate or semi-illiterate youth, both female and male.

The center offers six-month courses in basic nursing, tailoring, sewing and embroidery, fabric and screen painting, beautician work, and art (cards and stationery).

For male youths there is welding/fabricating, electrical wiring, electrical repair, carpentry, and scooter repair.

The institute also has a placement officer and they work closely with Nagpur Industry to find positions after graduation. The nursing course is in conjunction with the Mure Christian Hospital and its program places students alternatively in the hospital for practical work and in the classroom for theory. The graduates are in high demand in hospitals, nursing homes and for private nursing of the terminally ill.

There is a wonderful opportunity here for volunteers. At present there are about nine young women from the UK in addition to the youth from Korea.

One hairdresser from the UK has come to help set up a beauty parlour at the center. This will enable the students to get practical experience.

An outlet for the products made in the center is also planned. All these will enable the students to actively participate in the running of the program, covering some of the expenses incurred in the provision of materials.

A visit to Nagpur has been a spiritually uplifting experience as well as educational.

March 18, 2001 This comes to you from Bhagalpur, India (near the Bangladesh border) where Jake and I have been for almost two weeks. On arrival we were warmly welcomed by the Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Philip P. Marandih, his wife Lily, and their four children.

Overseas Staff Birthdays

NOVEMBER
2 - Fernando Cascante, Costa Rica (USA)
5 - Ellen Rae Dai, China
7 - Joe Reed, Central America
16 - Richard Schwarz, Nepal
21 - Jack Geddes, Taiwan

DECEMBER
1 - Heather Jones, Malawi
15 - Rick Allen, Kenya
21 - Catherine Chalin Clark, Kenya
29 - Rachel Julianna Pandy-Szekere

After just a day in Bhagalpur we left by car for Taljhari. The little more than 100-km journey took us six and a half hours as we traveled over the worst road imaginable, even worse than last year. In places there was just a hint of asphalt, and in other places there was just a hint of road. All but one of the bridges had been washed away during the last monsoon.

In Taljhari we were impressed with the way the school looked, gleaming white in the bright sunlight. The administrative block, which they have named after me, is also completed and furnished. It provides the principal with an office and the staff with a room for themselves, as well as storage space.

The wall around the compound, enclosing all the buildings, is complete and needs only to be plastered and painted. The gate is still under construction as this will be a rather elaborate arched entry into the compound. (Gates are very important in this culture; it must be impressive if the

institution it gives access to, is to be taken as being worth such a gate.)

Reviewing the expenses it was noted that both blocks, the latrine blocks, the wall and the gate have cost under $40,000 Canadian. This is quite a feat, and I must add that the best of materials were used. The foundation of the new school goes down 10 feet, and the roof is strong enough that, in time, a second storey can be added.

The welcome in the chapel/assembly hall was joyful, and again we were aware of a great love these people have for not just us, but all whom we represent. Many references were made to "the people of The Presbyterian Church in Canada" or to "Margaret's friends". During the prayers you were remembered and a blessing sought for you.

Gratitude was expressed, especially when the draft of $29,725 was presented for the renovation/reconstruction of the girls' residence. The total cost is expected to hover around $42,000.

When that residence is completed the school will be able to open its doors to another 100 girls.

Because the new residence will require furniture, the Bishop is planning to challenge the "alumni" of the school to get involved in raising the funds for that.

Jake and I then proceeded to Hiranpur. I dedicated the new emergency lighting which had been acquired, as designated. This was a gift from the group of six women who accompanied Jake and me to India in the fall of 1999.

They had been in attendance at the birth of a baby and were appalled at the conditions under which nursing staff worked in the absence of electricity (which comes in sporadically). This new system will provide up to eight hours of strong light to two delivery rooms, a fan in one, and a light at the nurse's station.

Here, as in Taljhari, we were warmly welcomed and there was much joy, singing, praise and prayer.

Over the past eight years, during which we visited Hiranpur seven times, many wonderful changes have taken place. Concerned and loving "Friends of St. Luke's" have provided for so many new pieces of equipment. One of the latest, a submersible pump for the well, has saved at least 500 rupees ($17) per day over the past year. That is a tremendous saving for a hospital often at a loss to pay daily wages.

On the way back from Hiranpur we visited the church at Kariode. Eighteen months ago we, together with the group from Niagara Presbytery, were present at the dedication of the newly constructed sanctuary. At the time it wasn't completed, although it had been expected that the work would be done by the time of our arrival. The delay was due to the monsoon, rising waters levels, and the cyclone that hit Bangladesh and caused flooding even here. Roads had been washed away, as had bridges, and trucks with supplies could not get through.

This visit the work was done, and the congregation received us with open arms. The whole church was decorated and outside a tent had been constructed under which a congregational supper was served. The brass cross, brought as a gift from the Niagara Presbytery, was mounted in a base and set on the communion table. Bishop Marandih celebrated communion, using the new silver set the Niagara Group had

presented to the congregation. This was his first official visit since the church had been completed and everyone was very happy. The love with which this man is received and the esteem in which he is held by all, repeatedly touch me.

At the Bishop's request we also visited the site of a new congregation. The Bishop has challenged the people of the Patna Diocese to "sacrifice" and give to the Millennium fund which was established for the purpose of erecting, in celebration, two new church buildings. He set aside one special Sunday to get the project off the ground, and on that Sunday 107,000 rupees were raised.

Back in Bhagalpur we visited the Sewica (Self Employed Women Industrial Christian Association). The center, built with the support of the PCC in 1996, looks almost as good as the day it was opened and the staff and students consider themselves blessed to have this institution. The Bishop asked me if I would present the graduating class with their diplomas and Jake and I happily accepted. There were so many young women graduates that the job needed to be shared. In dialogue with the women we again realized that here "hope" is found for the many who are illiterate and have no hope otherwise of dignity and a chance at a better future. Most importantly, it is here that the women who come for training encounter the living and loving Lord Jesus Christ, in whose name this work is carried out.

Please, keep the work of the Church in your prayers.

In His joy,

Margaret Vanderzweerde

Margaret and Jake Vanderzweerde have now retired. No doubt we will be hearing more about their activities. We wish them well.

Denise Van Wissen
Nicaragua

February, 2001-Warm greetings from Nicaragua, in the heart of Central America!

First I must thank you for so many beautiful Christmas cards! I've kept my favourites (Nativity scenes, snowy landscapes, and brightly-coloured cards) over the years, so this time I ran out of room on the shelves and strung them up. My friends all remarked on the very festive effect which complemented the other decorations. I put up a little tree for the first time ever since my dog, Kampura, is big enough now that she doesn't knock things over, but wish I could say the same for the new kitten!

I also made a traditional Nativity scene with forest moss purchased from a peasant gentleman and his daughter who were selling it from house to house. The neighbourhood children made sure that the tiny 'Niño Jesus' figure was carefully kept covered up until the 24th.

Many of you mentioned the weather in your cards, especially the snow, which I couldn't help hearing about this year. I've expanded on some scribbled journal notes, and I'll tell you about the weather down here these days...

Monday, February 5, 2001-School started today! Early this morning, out running with my dog, we almost got run over by three uniformed girl-teens careening, shrieking, down the hill, all on one bicycle! The streets of Ocotal were filled with mothers

walking their little ones to school, adolescents sauntering along with their classmates, and fathers on bikes with a child or two.

The school year here in Central America starts in February, usually not till the second last week of the month, but this year national elections are scheduled for November, so classes will finish a month early.

It remains cool here in the north of Nicaragua, and extremely windy, so because of the dryness, plenty of dust is blowing around. I can't remember ever having worn jeans and long-sleeved shirts so much. Of course, bodies in the tropics are on a different temperature scale; any time the mercury ventures below 16 or 17 Celsius, it is 'freezing' for us! It drops way down at night, but by mid-day the blazing sun has forced it up to closer to our accustomed 30 C!

The great heat of 'verano,' (summer) can't be too long in coming though, because since we're already months into the dry season (we never really had a rainy season last year), water is beginning to get scarce. I need to keep a big barrel filled up in the shower for when nothing comes out of the tap!

The water itself has a fermented-fruity smell, because the coffee berries are depulped up river. Many people are getting sick (diarrhoea) from this supposedly potable water, so we're trying to get the coffee producers to put in filtering machines. We now have our own local bottled water company, but few can afford to purchase bottled water when the water service itself costs too much for many folks.

The coffee season is another reason for the bustling activity in Ocotal these days. The harvest started in December and continues through February. Yesterday I accompanied two of our Health & Nutrition promoters to a community way up in the mountains, in 'coffee country,' and the bushes were still laden with ripe red and yellow coffee 'berries.' Unfortunately, we didn't find many of the women at home, since everyone is out picking.

Even in the lower, and therefore hotter and dryer communities, most of the men and many women, sometimes even entire families, are away at the harvest from Monday to Friday. Needless to say, this slows down our work with them, but we just have to be patient and wait for another few weeks until things get 'back to normal.'

Coffee prices are terribly low this year, only about US$60 per quintal (100 lbs.), compared to US$100 and higher last year. It's still the most money campesinos (peasant farmers) will make all year, though. The coffee producers are paying about five córdobas (Nicaraguan currency) per can, and they can pick about 10 cans a day, so that's about $6 Canadian. It works out to more than the minimum monthly wage, but it's still not even half the price of the 'basic food basket,' and of course it's seasonal work. For 'selling one's work', that is, weeding or planting someone else's fields, men earn only half the minimum wage, and one must keep in mind that each working person in Nicaragua supports at least five or six family members. Is any of this fair, or just? Of course not, but I'll leave that discussion for another letter!

Denise

The Barries
Malawi

February 2001 - It's Sunday afternoon. We are relaxing and admiring our fantastic view of the lake while we listen to the music of John Denver coming from next door. Sounds like home on Lake Huron's shores. But, this is coming to you from our second home in Malawi. We're situated at the foot of Zomba Plateau where we were asked to come and train the new Program Manager David Chomboto.

What happens during a day around here? Come along with us:

Report to the office at 7 a.m. along with the other 25 staff members.

Check the schedule of village visits to our Extension Projects including dairy, pig, fishpond, chicken, rabbit, guinea fowls, groundnuts, bakery and papermaking. The Income Generating Activities are carried out in 26 villages.

Today we're going to Ntamba village because the women will be baking scones to sell in the community and to some small groceries. They are delicious and sell quickly. Let's go on to the fishponds.

After harvesting fish from our own pond we will provide fingerlings to the women in Kapitikusya village to stock the ponds which they have each dug. Miriam goes with Bessie Napuwa, one of the three development facilitators who regularly visit these projects. Bessie says, "These women grew maize and soya beans but realized very little money from their harvest. With our help here at Naming'azi Farm I am sure they will do very well!"

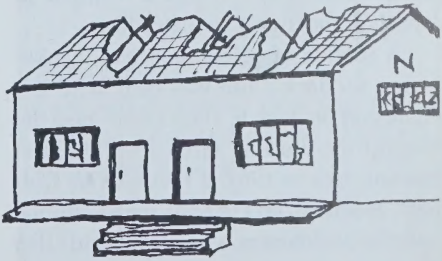
Mr. Ambali, another development facilitator, passed along this comment about the dairy cow project: "The women are getting tired of feeding the cow for so long with no returns. It's about time it was bred and producing milk because they know they have a market for that milk."

Following visits to the groundnuts, piggery and papermaking projects we go back to the office for record keeping. After lunch we work with the production team right here on the farm.

We are pleased to see the expansion of these programs out into the villages. We have just planted rice and sweet potatoes and by the time you receive this letter we will have vegetables for sale: onion, tomato, cabbage, rape and carrots. We enjoy our own papaya and have a new variety of large mango that doesn't leave your teeth full of strings.

This is the rainy season when farmers are busy so no courses are offered right now but we have facilities for workshops and seminars for up to 40 people. A CCAP youth group came for a weekend and we really enjoyed their singing.

We were shocked to find the three school blocks all damaged by strong winds in November with hardly any roof remaining. Imagine only two rooms okay for 700 pupils. They are outside in the sun, rain and wind where they work under a tree or in a room with no roof. Not easy in



the rainy season. We are working with the school committee and parents and village headmen to rectify the situation.

We never dreamed of living on site here at Naming'azi Farm. It's been everything we hoped for and a very humbling experience working and living with people who struggle every day just to survive. They are so appreciative of what we are trying to do here, that is to make them self-sufficient. We will always remember the kindness, respect and Christian love that has been shown to us by the Malawian people.

David & Miriam

IN MEMORIAM

John (Jack) H. McIntosh

Rev. Dr. John (Jack) H. McIntosh, missionary to the Korean Christian Church in Japan for 40 years, died on June 7, 2001. Jack and his wife Beth had been at the General Assembly the evening of June 5th. Jack was brought from hospital in an ambulance and presented with tributes by The Presbyterian Church in Canada and by the Korean Christian Church in Japan for his faithful service .

Jack and Beth had also spoken at the WMS Council meeting in May 2001. (See July/August pp 26-28.)

Jack identified with the Korean people in Japan in their struggle for human rights and justice. Jack refused the humiliating practice of being fingerprinted as aliens and was unable to come home for ten years to visit family and friends in Canada. Eventually the struggle resulted in Japan's withdrawing the hated law.

A service of celebration and thanksgiving for Jack's life was held at Knox, Agincourt on June 9. Glen Davis gave the funeral meditation. Glen recalled first meeting Jack in 1961 at Presbyterian College, Montreal, and later of spending time with the McIntoshes when Joyce and Glen Davis were in Japan. He highlighted Jack's belief in the laity of the church, and his call to others to fruitfulness and joy. The key to joy, Glen said, is in loving others.

Dr. Ruth Alison of Toronto also spoke. Ruth knew Jack and his family when he lived on his family's farm near Guelph as a boy of four or five years old. Ruth treated Jack in the late 60s when as a medical

Beth and Jack McIntosh before their return to Japan the last time.

"Let those love now, who never loved before; let those who always loved, now love the more! Now!!"

oncologist, she was asked to see a young man who had a recurrence of Hodgkin's Disease. Later, although Jack had a complete remission, his life continued to be plagued with physical problems.

Following is a quote from the McIntoshes last newsletter before leaving Japan:

"Now we move on from this threshold, excited at the prospects of living and lives, the cultivating, the seeding, the nurturing and harvesting times which we have shared in this field of God's mission with his chosen partners are a great send-off to the way set before us. Bonded in Christ, we may part with dear friends in Japan, but with prayers and other links, we leave our hearts in the communities we became a part of here. "Let those love now, who never loved before; let those who always loved, now love the more! Now!!"

David Agwu Onuoha

David Agwu Onuoha of Aba, Abia State, Nigeria died in a motor accident on May 27, 2001. He was 51 years old. David was married to Arlene Randall, missionary of the Presbyterian Church in Canada to Malawi for many years. David, a layman, was very active in the Presbyterian Church in Malawi.

David and Arlene had three children: David Agwu, Urey Karen David and Rebecca. David also left behind a large extended family as well as many friends.

Dr. Marjorie Ross of International Ministries, PCC, attended the funeral and gave one of the tributes. The sympathy of the WMS goes out to Arlene and her family.

David Agwu Onuoha, left with wife Arlene.

Millennium Quilt Exhibit 2001

Sept 6 - 26: St. Columba Presbyterian Church, Belleville, Ontario
Sept 30 - Oct 7: Central Presbyterian Church, Brantford, Ontario
Oct 14 - 21: Knox Presbyterian Church, Goderich, Ontario
Oct 28 - Nov 4: First Presbyterian Church, Brandon, Manitoba
Nov 12 - Dec 7: Knox College, Toronto, Ontario

Fascinating Facts from the Bible Compiled by Eve Stickland

Did you know...
Paul and Barnabas were sent off to Cyprus and Salamis as the first foreign missionaries.
Holy Bible, New Living Translation. Acts 13:2-5

NEWS

Oikocredit Canada Welcomes International Visitor

The difference between giving a gift of money and lending money is reflected in the self esteem of the recipient. Oikocredit, previously the Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society, has been providing small loans to the economically disadvantaged for twenty-five years, at a reasonable interest rate. The rate of return has been very successful.

Eighty-five percent of loans are repaid by people who were refused a loan by regular banks. Some donated funds are used to offset risk investments. If the poor (women especially) have access to money they take pride in their projects and their ability to help provide for their family, and will faithfully repay their loans.

The Presbyterian Church was the first church in Canada to invest 5% of its undesignated investment funds in EDCS' "Life for the Poor." Later, the Women's Missionary Society invested $75,000. Just recently, the WMS agreed to move its investment from the Canadian to the International agency so that its name could be seen on the investors' list as women in mission supporting other women in mission.

On April 19, 2001, Ben Simmes, from Oikocredit's International Office visited the Presbyterian Church offices, accompanied by Heather Johnston. Heather was instrumental in organizing Oikocredit's Canadian office. Ben is Manager of Member Relations and Fund Officer.

Oikocredit has $130 million dollars in share capital at present. They challenge churches who are among the economically privileged to examine their investment priorities, and to consider allocating some of their wealth to enterprises that enable poor and powerless people to borrow start-up or development so that they can be self-supporting.

For more information contact:
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183 Chedoke Avenue
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Email:canada.sa@oikocredit.org
Web site: www.oikocredit.org/ca

Ben Simmes, Oikocredit

God of Majesty

God of Majesty.
God of grace.
With trembling heart I seek your face.
The temple veil is torn in two.
Opening the way to come to you.
My hands are uplifted.
My feet unshod.
I'm standing before a Holy God.

Jolene Eby

We can make a difference.

photo: JF Beauchesne, PWS&D

Working with the *Canadian Foodgrains Bank* and *Action by Churches Together,* PWS&D is making a difference in Ethiopia. Food distributions help people survive critical food shortages in times of drought. Water, income generating and agriculture projects are helping protect against future famines.

Presbyterian World Service & Development

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photo: Richard Fee, PWS&D

You can help. Please support PWS&D.

In the Society

Presbyterial

The Work of our Hands was the theme and focus chosen by the **Co-ordinating Committee of Superior** Presbyterial for its Mission Fair held on Mission Awareness Sunday at Lakeview Church, Thunder Bay. (See photo below.)

Booths representing various local and national "mission-oriented" organizations were set up. These included the Dew Drop Inn, a local soup kitchen; Mother's Cupboard - AIDS Committee which collects and distributes food and household articles for clients, and Sleeping Giant Refugee Sponsorship Group.

National booths included Habitat for Humanity and "Just Us!" Coffee Roaster Co-op, Wolfville NS.

The booths were centred under a "tent canopy" (bed sheets in disguise) and Makarios, the Christian clown, greeted families as they entered the Fair. Lots of popcorn, hot dogs, chips, cookies and juice were consumed. Proceeds from food sales (over $200) were forwarded to PWS&D.

Everyone attending was given a passport at the door. The children's passports allowed them to visit four activity centres which introduced them to the "Meeting Friends in Malawi" study. They each made an African clay bowl, coloured the Learning/Sharing placemat, solved the Word Search puzzle, and cut out a miniature mosquito net to glue onto the cover of their passport. When their passports were stamped they watched a video about how the money raised was going to be used.

Everyone enjoyed listening to the impromptu singing of the young adults from Burma who now live in Thunder Bay through the Sleeping Giant Refugee Sponsorship Group.

In Tumbuka (spoken in Malawi), "Mwende majora" (Goodbye), until the Fair comes to town again.

The spring meeting of **Edmonton Peace River** Presbyterial was held at the home of Norma Proudfoot on June 12.

President Millie Freeman opened the meeting with a short poem from "Chicken

Soup for the Soul."

Following reports and minutes Operation Friendship was discussed. Edna Murray gave a short report on letters received from missionaries. Sheila Omah-Maharajh reported on the May Council meeting.

Marjorie Scott spoke on her recent trip to Tanzania, Africa. After thanking Marjorie, the president closed with a short prayer.

Presided over by presbyterial president, Sheila Jakus, thirty-three members attended the annual Friendship luncheon held June 2 at **St. Columba Church, Vancouver.**

Following lunch Kathy Ball was introduced as the new Co-ordinator of Educational Ministries for B.C. Synod/Synodical.

Members were entertained by two young violinists and Darlene Jones of St. Columba, who sang and then led the group in singing.

Delegate Lorraine Louven of Calvin, Abbotsford, gave an interesting and informative report on Council meeting in May.

Zena MacKay engaged members in a quiz on some of the missionaries, and then led in prayer for special requests.

Pictured right is **Evelyn Davies,** age 94, at a recent meeting of Barrie Presbyterial. Mrs. Davies is one of the Presbyterial's oldest active members. She spends her spare time knitting pneumonia vests which she brings to every Presbyterial meeting. These vests are sent to mission hospitals. Evelyn's home church and WMS group is St. Andrew's, Barrie, Ontario.

Local

St. Andrew's, Beeton WMS presented **Annetta Cranston** (above) flowers on her 90th birthday, May 6, 2001 and a certificate of recognition for her service at St. Andrew's. She has been a WMS member for 46 years.

The WMS of **Whalley Presbyterian Church, Surrey** paid tribute to their friend Alice Murrary who died May 25, 2001, aged 89 years. She was a faithful member of Whalley church, and an elder. Alice was president of the WMS Afternoon Guild for many years.

As a Christian pioneer she was part of a delegation that lobbied the Provincial Government in 1955 to successfully have

a hospital built for the city of Surrey. She volunteered with the hospital until her death. Her faithfulness to God inspired us all. We will miss her. Her loving family survives Alice.

The photo (below) shows a few of over 50 vests and caps knitted by **Betty Grant**, a member of the **Josephine-Grace Stone WMS of Westminster Church, Sault Ste. Marie,** Ontario.

Many of these vests were knitted when Betty and her husband George were driving across the USA on holiday. What a varied medley of vibrant colours! This is a popular, current project of this group.

Gladys Dymond, a member of **Thornhill** WMS, Thornhill, Ontario, who passed away recently, knitted several hundred pneumonia vests for babies in Malawi. She was a faithful supporter and encourager to the group and its members individually.

Helen Campbell, a long time member, worker and supporter of WMS, has been honoured with Governor General's Caring Canadian Award. Helen has been a volunteer in the true sense of the word since 1942, when as a teenager, she worked at a United Church welfare camp.

Helen was born in St. Lambert, Quebec. She graduated from McGill University in 1951 with three degrees including an MSW. After her marriage to Colin Campbell she moved to Montreal and became a Presbyterian. They had three children. The family attended First Presbyterian Church, Montreal.

She continued to help others in the community as a volunteer. She was coordinator for Meals-on-Wheels for 28 years. For 34 years she served in various capacities on the board of the auxiliary of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Home for seniors.

Helen's volunteer work continued when First Church amalgamated with Knox Crescent and Kensington in 1984. She served as secretary of the WMS until her resignation in 2000. Helen and Colin were closely involved in the life of the church, driving people to and from services and meetings, and quietly helping many. After Helen was widowed she continued to reach out to others.

In June 2000, she found she could not continue her many activities due to the progression of ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). She now lives in Orleans, Ontario with her daughter Anne.

The award will be presented to her later this year at Rideau Hall.

Mrs. S.E. Gunn (Leona), a long-time member of WMS and of **Helen McGill Circle of Kerrisdale Church, Vancouver**, passed away peacefully on November 14, 2000 in her 89th year.

Leona had been superintendent of

Kerrisdale Church Cradle Roll for 37 years. She also faithfully sent Christmas, Easter, sympathy, and get-well cards to all the shut-ins in the congregation for many years. She will be truly missed.

Anniversary

The **Britton WMS of Knox, Listowel**, Ontario, celebrated their 90th anniversary on April 4, 2001.

Special guest, honorary member Lillian Clelland who is 102, cut the cake. She is also an honorary president of the Stratford Presbyterial (now Huron-Perth).

The theme for the worship service was "Easter." Scripture was read by Ruth Robinson, and Lois Robinson gave prayer.

Marion Bristowe sang two solos. Shirley Aitcheson brought greeting from Huron-Perth Presbyterial and reminisced about growing up in Britton area and Knox church.

Members acted in a skit depicting the first meeting held in February 1911.

Lillian Clelland is shown cutting the anniversary cake. With her is daughter-in-law Margaret Clelland, president of Britton WMS.

Women of the W.O.C.*

We, the women of the W.O.C.
Are here to serve in our community.
God brought us here from far and near
To do his work and have some cheer.
Like all good Christians we're sisters and brothers.
We get together to help all others.
From baking sales and having dinners,
When we serve the Lord we all are winners.
To help humankind who are down and out
Or those in need and have some doubt.
Then we've done the job we've been called to do,
So thank you God; we owe it all to you.

Donna Ridout

*Women of the Church

Gladys Stover, left of PCC International Ministries staff, accepting blankets and vests made by Margaret Ramsay Auxiliary members, Knox Church, Leamington, Ontario. President Carolyn Reid presented these at church offices.

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CIRCULATION NEWS

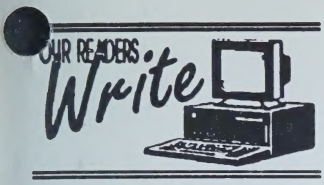
Katherine Allen

Aspiring Writer: I've finally written something that will be accepted by any magazine.
Fiancé: Congratulations! What is it?
Aspiring writer: A cheque for a year's subscription.

It is time to consider renewing your subscription to the Glad Tidings magazine. By now your congregation will have received the Glad Tidings mailing which was sent in August to all Glad Tidings secretaries/contact persons whom we had listed by your group during the year. It contains the subscription lists and ideas for promotion. If by mid-September the Glad Tidings secretary for your congregation has not received the mailing, please contact our office.

At the February meeting of the Council Executive it was agreed to increase the cost of Glad Tidings subscriptions for 2002 to $11.00 for six issues. This will help offset some of the increase in costs of publication. The deadline is November 1, 2001 so please ensure that the subscription lists are returned by the deadline, for changes/deletions or additions to be made for January.

Please make sure that your name and address is correct on the subscription list before the secretary returns it to the office. The post office requires that the address includes either a street address or box number. If neither of these are listed, please include them on the list.



Dear June,

After reading the letters to the editor in the last edition of Glad Tidings, I wish to tell you of my idea of God the Father. When I pray to Him, I picture Him as a great light with a form within. The brilliance of His presence would be beyond anyone's ability to gaze at.

I was brought up from my childhood to believe that we were made in God's image, which is why we must care properly for our bodies in respect to God.

The very fact that God's only begotten Son was like the rest of us in bodily characteristics, so must His heavenly Father be shaped the same way.

We must each form our own image of what God is like, for our own comfort and strength. To me, He is my heavenly Father, and that is all that I ever want or need.

Sincerely,
Catherine B. Rice
WMS First Church, North Pelham, Ontario

Dear June:

May I add my comments as to why I have no problem with God as Father? Do we not think of God as Triune or three in one, Father, Son and Holy Spirit? To me, God transcends gender. No one has seen him/her. We only feel the spirit.

Jesus was sent by God. As male precisely because males took the dominant role in those times.

Secondly, I have no problem with Thee, Thou, Thine, etc. I find it distinctive, different, special. Knowing and loving Jesus isn't casual to me. He is special and above any familiarity.

Thirdly, because I feel special, a child of God, it is easy to revere him (or set him apart) with special salutations.

However, we have choices, we are free to use the terminology with which we are most comfortable. The important thing is to come to him.

Lovingly,
Marjorie Wincott
Stamford, Niagara falls, Ontario

IN REMEMBRANCE

Mrs. Marion Cullen
Knox, Agincourt, ON

Mrs. Finlay (Ethel) McPherson
Knox-St. Andrew's, Dutton, ON

Mrs. Jean Barker
Knox, Guelph, ON

Mrs. Shirley Carmichael
Mrs. Mary Young
Maisonneuve/St. Cuthbert's, Montreal, QC

Mrs. Margaret Creighton
St. Paul's, Port Hope, ON

Liz McPhail
May Tunks
Knox, Kintyre, Rodney, ON

Mrs. May Habkirk
First, Seaforth, ON

Alice Murray
Whalley, Surrey, BC

Gladys Dymond
Thornhill, ON

Mrs. S. E. Gunn
Kerrisdale, Vancouver, BC

Mrs. Sadie Barbour
St. Andrew's-Wingham, ON

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Glad Tidings

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GLAD TIDINGS challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally and internationally.

GLAD TIDINGS through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired and motivated to action.

GLAD TIDINGS provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS (WD) or by the Editor.

Written in Love

L. June Stevenson, Editor

November 2001

Through the Looking Glass

by Luanne Robotham

Not too long after the terrorist attack at the World Trade Centre on Sept 11, 2001, I decided that it was time to return to my home church. It had been a long time since I had sat in a church pew. I had to go, to find something - comfort, reason, understanding, but mostly comfort.

It felt familiar and comfortable just walking up the front steps. I noticed the faces so familiar from days gone past. Then, the sound of old hymns that I remembered from my youth that I had heard and sung so often in the Baptist churches of my cousins. I could actually softly sing the words that went with the medley from the piano at the front of the church.

I found my way up the stairs to the balcony, sat in a familiar pew, and bowed my head in prayer. As I straightened up at the end of my prayer I looked for the familiarity and the comfort of the beautiful stained glass windows that I had always enjoyed. The light streamed through the windows in a way that I had never seen before. I stood up and found an usher to ask what had happened to the two larger stained glass windows. The reply was "They are out to be refurbished, and should return soon."

I returned to my seat. It was only then that I realized that it was the first time that I had ever seen the outside world through the church windows. The roofs were interesting patterns of slate and tile perched on top of old brick houses. I had always admired the windows for the beauty of the stained glass, but did not realize that my view of the real world had quietly been blocked from view.

Much like my view of the world before Sept 11. I did not see the world as it really was, but as seen only through stained glass. Before me is a view of the world that now captures my attention in a way that it never did before. Like it or not, we must look at the real world, and try to find our way through all that we have seen and heard. And we must look for God's beauty and love there. We must pray for a way through all of this that will lead us back to peace.

Dear readers: For one of the few times in my life, I find myself with nothing coherent to say. I have started to write a message several times, and in several different ways, to express my thoughts on peace. Nothing came together. Scripture did reveal one sentence which has been a comfort and an assurance:He [Christ] is our peace - Ephesians 2:14. A good phrase to keep in our hearts these days.

Today, an email came in with *Through the Looking Glass.* Thank you, Luanne, for saying so well what for some of us has been difficult. *June*

Strive for the Greater Gifts

by Linda Moore

Adapted from a sermon. given by Linda Moore at Knox College Chapel, Toronto. Linda is studying part time at Knox, and working at Portland Place, Toronto in connection with Evangel Hall. In 2000-2001, Linda did her social field placement with Boarding Homes Ministry. She is now part of a team starting up in the Beaches area. Through her placement Linda discovered a ministry of surprise and blessing.

But strive for the greater gifts. After hearing Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31 against a hierarchy of spiritual gifts with the body of Christ, the lectionary reading leaves us hanging with this unexplained command: *But strive for the greater gifts (verse 31a).* I was very tempted to continue reading on into chapter 13 - the one we know and love so well, but which is often taken out of context, and used to describe a very private, individual love.

Rather, the hymn to love is the consummation of all the previous chapters of Paul's letter. Love - the greatest gift of God - the one which unites us, and makes life in community as the body of Christ possible. Without it, we are noisy gongs and clanging cymbals, clamouring to have our individual voices heard, over and above those who are different from us.

This seems to be the situation in the Corinthian church. They have stressed certain people, and certain gifts over others - leading to envy and disdain. The litany of sins that Paul calls them to account for, are a testimony to this. In this letter, he names divisions, quarrels and jealousy; some puffed up in favour of one against another; arrogance; boasting; taking a fellow believer to court; and at the Lord's Supper, some bringing their own meal, eating their fill and becoming drunk, while others go hungry.

But the irony of their divisions, is that they seem to be rooted in another gift of God to their community - their diversity. Their members probably included Romans, Greeks and Jews, slaves and free, rich and poor, men and women in leadership roles. They were struggling for unity across ethnic and sociological categories, which did not usually join together. Because of this, they are transparently human, and that is what makes them a special gift to the church today. They remind us that bodies are messy, weak, and often the parts do not work together as God created them to.

When we see their struggle for unity within their diversity, it is very tempting to opt for sameness, to think of differences as barriers to unity, obstacles to be overcome. Sameness makes life much simpler, but it also strangles creativity and leaves us lukewarm. Despite our gifts, we become the

poor. As Paul shows us, diversity is a necessary and enriching facet of the unity of the church. The body requires a variety of members. Its healthy functioning is dependent on its diversity.

So here we have a paradox - theirs and ours - the one and the many. Both are a gift of God to the church, but how do they co-exist? For the Corinthian church and for us today, it is in the recognition and the living out of our interdependence, that we manifest the body of Christ. What keeps the body functioning properly is precisely the need of each member for the others. Like human bodies, we are organically related. We need each other.

My social field placement this past year was with Boarding Homes Ministry. Begun in 1995 by the Rev. Rodger Hunter, this ministry builds Christian community in the often bleak environment of the city's boarding homes, providing the people of these homes with pastoral care.

The residents live in crowded, trying conditions, and often struggle with serious physical and mental health problems, as well as the effects of poverty, which illness often brings. Teams of volunteers from various churches regularly visit these homes, bringing their skills of listening and compassion. Together, residents and visitors share their lives, worship, socialize and celebrate the love of Christ.

Since September 2000, I have had the honour of coming to know the residents of a number of these homes. One in particular has 30 residents in a large old Parkdale house. The rooms have been broken up to make as many bedrooms as possible, usually with two or three people to one small bedroom. The communal living space is in the basement: a cramped dining room, and a dark smoking and TV lounge, with a few old couches and chairs. This particular boarding home does not yet have a team of church volunteers, so Rodger and I visit each week.

As I watched in awe, I could feel God holding us all in his hand, in a moment of holy time.

The week before Christmas we arrived at 11:30 a.m. expecting the caterer to be there with the Christmas lunch ordered for the residents. He wasn't. Rodger tried to reach him on the phone without success, so we just had to wait and see if he was coming. In the meantime, I handed out clementines and cookies to tide people over until the meal came, while Rodger set up the keyboard for the musician who would come later to lead the singing of Christmas carols.

One of the residents, John, is a small thin man with ill-fitting clothes, a generous head of wavy gray hair, a bushy beard, and intense blue eyes. Usually a bundle of nerves, he smokes while he paces and runs his fingers through his hair.

Sometimes, he may crouch down on his haunches against the wall and talk to himself. On at least one occasion, I overheard a heated argument he was having with one of the staff. Quite honestly, his behaviour intimidated me, and so he was not someone I purposely engaged in conversation, except for a customary greeting.

Music touches deep chords in our souls which can be stretched tight at Christmas time.

Rodger had told me that John could play the piano, but the man I observed did not seem to fit this picture, so I had not thought a lot about it - that is, until Rodger asked him to play while we waited for the caterer to arrive. John sat down, ran his hands through his hair a number of times, and immediately launched into a rocking bumble boogie.

His fingers were like lightning flashing over the keys, and soon the energy flowing from his body was bouncing the keyboard so much, that Rodger had to hold it so that it would not come off the stand. The other residents responded with smiles, then clapping, and soon they were singing along. Many began to call out selections for John to play. He knew almost all of them - everything from big band, classical, rock and roll, Christmas carols, rhythm and blues, to jazz.

Some people got up and danced in the centre of the room. Others sang together, as they were transported back in time to memories connected with the music that was flowing so freely. At one point, two men as different as night and day, seemed to be raising imaginary glasses in toast as they heartily sang together "Daisy, Daisy, give me your answer do", and later on in the same spirit, "Joy to the World".

But the most amazing thing was the transformation in John. His intensity rose and fell with the music. As he continued to play, the edginess seemed to leave him, his face and body started to relax, and he began to literally glow, as the music flowed out to us all. The energy that had seemed so driven when he began, now seemed to have taken on a gentle quality which was an extension of his very being. As I watched in awe, I could feel God holding us all in his hand, in a moment of holy time.

While still savouring this moment, I began to look around the room, and was suddenly struck, deeply, by my own blindness. As I scanned the faces, I started to wonder about the kaleidoscope of God given gifts which were hidden in these friends, whom I was just beginning to know.

I thought of all the other boarding homes in our city and the many residents, ignored and forgotten, because of illness My heart began to ache with the knowledge of our waste of God's gifts to us - the most precious being the gift of each other.

As John played on, I noticed that others were also immersed in private thoughts. Music touches deep chords in our souls, chords which can be stretched tight at Christmas time. And for the people of these homes, many without meaningful family connections, holiday times can be particularly painful.

One resident, sensing the intense emotion in the room, suggested a time of meditation on Jesus, and prayer together. Paul's words echoed in that suggestion, "If one member suffers, all suffer together with them." After a time of honest acknowledgment and offering of our collective joys

For us that day, the mystery of the church as one body in Christ with many members took on living flesh.

and sorrows to God, we returned to singing and celebrating together. John relaxed a little more with each new request he played. Paul's words again echoed in that room, "If one member is honoured, all rejoice together with them."

By now Rodger was very anxious about the caterer who was an hour late, and suggested implementing contingency plans. The graciousness of the residents reached out and enfolded him. They lovingly ministered to Rodger, assuring him that all would be well, and encouraged him to sit down and relax which he eventually did.

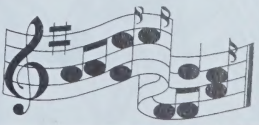
Shortly before the caterer finally arrived, John gradually drifted away from the keyboard, and us, probably needing a little quiet space for awhile. A beautiful meal was finally served, after which gifts were received and carols were sung. John didn't reappear until we were just about to leave. As we were saying goodbyes, I heartily thanked John for playing for us, to which he responded with a beaming smile.

In that moment, I was assured that John knew what a gift he had been for all of us that afternoon, and I saw the gift that we had been for him reflected in his face. For us that day, the mystery of the church as one body in Christ with many members took on living flesh - the broken body of John, held in the many loving arms of a Christian community.

Last Friday after the holiday break of almost a month, I returned to that boarding home. When Rodger and I arrived, John was sitting on the couch, smoking and withdrawn. I considered approaching him, but thought that here was lots of time, so I took off my coat and put my bag down in the corner. The next time I looked, he was gone.

Now I wonder if, and when, John will again, stay. In contemplating his absence, I am drawn into Parker Palmer's image of community: a company of strangers, a place where people confront the stranger in each other, and in themselves, and still know, that they are members, one of another.

As I reflect on that Christmas celebration, I can see Jesus standing in that place, and saying to all of us gathered there, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour" (Luke 4: 18). For me, this scripture was fulfilled in that boarding home experience.



Boarding Homes Ministry has been established in many communities across Canada. They are urgently looking for teams of volunteers in all areas.

For further information contact: Rev. Rodger Hunter: 1-416-992-4987.

Tiny Christmas Creche

A creche is a wonderful "forever" kind of treasure that reminds us each Christmas season of the miracle of Christ's birth. Follow the directions to make a miniature one for a very special place in your room. Each time you look at it, thank God for the gift of his Son to all people.

What You Need:

- Bakers' clay (See recipe in back of book.)
- Small rocks & stones, sprigs of evergreen, dried grass or straw
- Scraps of cloth
- Glue
- Night light (optional)

What to Do:

Use bakers' clay to make small figures of Mary, Joseph, the baby, shepherds, sheep, and other animals.
Bake the figures according to the directions.
Use small rocks and stones to build a cave-like stable just big enough for your figures.
Add greens and straw, cloth for a blanket, scarf or cloak, as you wish.
Set your creche scene in a quiet place where you can think about Jesus' birth whenever you see it.

Note: You might find a night light to shine on your nativity scene!

Source: *Hunting for Bible Treasures: 101 Games, Puzzles, Projects, Crafts, Experiments, and More* by MacKenzie (ZondervanPublishingHouse, 1994), available at your local bookstore or by calling 1-800-727-3480.

Portrait of an Unknown Woman

by Joan Bond

A woman neither ugly nor pretty. At times, slats of light on her face framed in a mirror, would cause her to believe she was - for a moment - handsome. And she could be, if only smiles would trespass her face. But forty-four years stretched across her countenance, and recent news of births, remarriages, still did not bring wide parenthesis to her mouth.

Less than her prospects of getting married were the possibilities of her two older brothers having daughters. What could she discuss with nephews involved in hockey; she abhorred the sport. A niece would be her heart's desire. Someone who could distract her from her own seemingly drowned future. A niece with twin teddy bears in a doll carriage. A niece serving tiny jam sandwiches without crusts. A niece who would eat from a Bunnykins bowl, and one day leap into life's current and not submerge.

For she felt, although she could swim adequately, the dog paddle was her lot in life. And canines paddling out to sea for all their worth do not grin.

The morning light flitted on the hallway mirror catching her cheekbones to reveal a vestige of beautification. Her lips tightened as she pulled open the door.

Surely one day her brothers would understand why she decided this morning to sell her antiques, her well-cared-for linens and library, her capacious town house, to travel to that country with the lead-grey, crumbling orphanages. To write the organization which, for the past ten years, had sent her a Christmas letter, a reply envelope, a brochure with photos of children unwanted.

By the time her quickened steps reached the bus stop, the sun showers had relented. Her umbrella glistened.

Lake Crossing

by Marti Dorland

I pulled my deerskin mukluks on over a couple of layers of socks. The night was raw and I'd need the extra warmth before I reached my destination. An outpost of the Red Lake Mission was about two miles from my trailer, two miles across a frozen lake. With a film for the youth meeting tucked under my arm I started out.

The sky was starless but the lights of the mission were visible on the other shore. A light wind blew the loose snow into eddies around me. I usually enjoyed this journey, the expanse of snow-covered ice, black spruce edging its shore, the stillness and poignant solitude. After a hectic week in the classroom I was hoping to savour the hour alone. But I hadn't gone far when I heard something behind me.

"Why does he have to follow me?", I murmured, as I saw a dog emerging from the alders along the bank. On this northwestern reserve there always seemed to be a hound at your heels. The dog's yapping and barking were disturbing the peaceful scene. Tonight I particularly resented his presence as he came leaping toward me. I tried to ignore him, and lost in my own thoughts, trudged on.

Soon I left the lee of the woods and came out into the open part of the bay. Here the wind was blowing wildly, stinging my face and blurring visibility. This lake was notorious for sudden snow squalls, but I decided to continue. The snow on the path was packed hard and if I could manage not to slip off, I'd be all right.

The dog had been behind me all this time, but now he tired of the slow pace and ran out in front. I could just make out his waving husky tail as he charged ahead into the wind and snow. Suddenly I felt very glad to have him. The lights across the lake were now completely obscured. At times I even lost sight of the dog. Then every so often, he would turn back, sniffing the air or giving a little yip, as he waited impatiently for me.

I knew I was out in a vast open area of lake, sky, and northern bush, yet felt imprisoned by the swirling white. I thought about the Hudson Bay clerk who had died in the 100 yards between the store and house during a whiteout. And when my foot occasionally slipped off the path into the deep snow another fear assailed me. Sometimes holes had been made in the ice for fishing or getting water. Normally

these were marked, but tonight it was impossible to see marking or hole.

My usual serene ramble was becoming an endurance test. Turning back now was impractical. I must be more than halfway across. And I did have the dog, who was calmly and lightly picking his way along the path. As I struggled on, I remembered with regret my earlier thoughts about him.

Now he was standing motionless, ears perked up, and body quivering. He seemed to be hearing something. Yes, there was something! Out of the white silence came a faint welcome sound. Another dog was barking not fifty feet up ahead. My canine friend answered in excited yelps and then took off without waiting for me. But his mission was completed. In just a few minutes I felt the rise of the shore under foot. Looking up, I saw a blurr of twinkling lights.

That night I learned a valuable lesson. Sometimes unwelcome circumstances come into our lives. It is not until later that we see God's purpose in allowing them.

The Lord will watch over your going out and your coming in, from this time forth and forever more.

(Psalm 121:8)

I Need Thee

A Prayer by Kathleen Soucoup

Living God, I'm so tired, especially of all the committee work that seems necessary to keep your Church functioning, and hopefully, spreading the word of your goodness. I have begun to wonder, Lord, if I am neglecting the people in my life because I am so involved with *this* committee and *that* committee.

Help me, Lord, as I try to determine my priorities, to always keep in mind that my first priority is in the belonging to you. I know that if I seek you earnestly, you will be there for me, but sometimes I get so busy I pass you by.

Let that not be so today as I leave my home for one more committee meeting. Be with the people on the committee, Lord, as we make decisions; help us to recognize your purpose for us today and for the future. I, especially, Lord, need your help in staying mindful that you care both for your people and the Church. Be with me as I search for a balance in my life that will be pleasing to you. Amen.

Below: Mary Lou Johnston stands in front of the "famous" wall, with the Chateau Frontenac behind.

Tears not Tear Gas

Why I Went to Quebec

by Mary Lou Johnston

As a retired teacher living in the country in Ontario, why should I be interested in the organized protest towards the FTAA, the plan for free trade among the American nations? In what way did it have anything to do with me? More to the point, why should I go to Quebec for the Summit of the Americas where police feared that protesters would make the city a very dangerous place?

I would be the first to admit that curiosity was a big motivation. What really goes on at these conferences which are organized outside the main theatres of negotiation while the big shots, in this case the presidents and the prime ministers, attending the official Summit of the Americas, come only to give official speeches and then sign the document? Why not just read about it in the papers?

But I have also been following the literature of church supported coalitions such as ECEJ (Ecumenical Coalition for Economic Justice) and ICCHRLA (Interchurch Coalition for Human Rights in Latin America) as well as the publications of CCPA (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives) and it seemed that they had a point, a very big point.

The economic policies of the world's bigger nations, dominated by the rich ones, have had a disastrous effect on the developing countries. More people are poorer than ever. But according to the staunch supporters of free trade, if we just let the market move without hindrance, in the long run, everyone will prosper.

There has been growth, but usually the kind which produces wealth for the companies and worse living conditions for the people involved. So I wanted to hear more

from the voices of Central and South America, and add my voice to theirs.

Also, as a Christian living in a rich and comfortable country, I know that when people are suffering in another part of the world, I can pray for them, but there is something more in the gospel: "inasmuch as you have done it..."! I want to understand *why* there is so much injustice and inequality in the world and then *do* something.

Yes, we humans are a sinful species but specifically what are we doing wrong? And the poverty or wealth in other countries affects us, directly or indirectly. We in Canada receive many refugees from lands where there are wars and people are put into prison if they object to lack of land or any form of injustice in the workforce.

Our own communities rise and fall depending on global industrial or commercial development. My town Dunnville lost its television assembly plant years ago to Japanese expertise. This summit seemed to be a good opportunity to find out some of the answers to my economic questions.

The great engine of these events has been the internet over the last few years. Organizations in every Latin American country were communicating as soon as the proposed FTAA and the Summit of the Americas was announced. This is actually the Second People's Summit, (Segunda Cumbre de los Pueblos de America); the first was in Santiago in 1998.

This spring hundreds of people were invited to come to Quebec as speakers and panelists to present their experiences at the alternative conference, the Peoples' Summit of the Americas.

They represented labour, women, indigenous people, teachers, environmentalists, politicians, the media and human rights specialists. As a participant, anyone could register at one of the seven forums at the summit web site. Other events were open to the public.

(An interesting point learned after the event: The Quebec government and the federal government, both in favour of free trade, each contributed $300,000 to the People's Summit whose purpose was to gather people together who are oppposed to free trade.)

On Friday and Saturday. April 20 and 21, the world knew that the leaders of the western hemisphere had arrived in Quebec, that the anarchists had broken down the hated "wall" and the police had responded with tear gas. But very few knew that since Monday several thousand people, including me, who were very concerned about the plight of the ordinary Americans, both north and south, had been meeting in churches, colleges and temporary tents in lower Quebec, earnestly discussing the dangers of more open and unregulated trade.

How did we communicate in four languages? When you enter a forum, you hand in a credit card and they in turn give you a small translator with earphones. This enables you to listen to the simultaneous translations in your language of choice, English, French, Spanish or Portuguese. We attended the forum on 'the role of the state in the redistribution of wealth as a means to fight poverty' which involved ideas relating to social policies and social programmes, taxation, public services and health care systems. The buzz word these days is "governance".

For example, a nurse from Guatemala

explained how devastating it was for her to feel so helpless in treating AIDS patients. She knew the drugs existed because a few rich patients received them. But the big drug companies fiercely resist cheaper versions to be distributed and her patients continue to suffer and die.

Other panelists included a woman from Brazil talking about the problems of women in that country and a man from Mexico told about working conditions in the maquilladoras, the economic zones where big companies contract out branch plant factories where wages are extremely low and people live in nearby shacks without any services.

One of the biggest problems concerns investment. If a foreign company wants to invest in a project but the local community feels it would jeopardize the environment or not be good for the local people, the company can sue the government for loss of their future profits. This actually happened with a waste dump in Mexico where the government lost and had to pay the company.

In other words the corporate interests have more power than the state as a result of NAFTA (the free trade deal which included Mexico). While we constantly complain about the government, Canadian speakers said, the state remains the only truly effective expression of organized citizen power. The question is, how can government follow an international agreement and still be strong and independent?

Outside the forums the atmosphere was festive with drummers, music, and craft kiosks.

Old Quebec city was a ghost town with a significant absence of tourists and plywood dealers making a fortune boarding

The four languages of welcome.

up the fronts of all antique stores. On Friday in the big tent, an all day Teach-in continuously presented speakers, videos, and musicians from every country in the Americas. Even the Raging Grannies wrote a few numbers especially for the occasion.

Blanca Chancoso, a diminuitive woman from Ecuador, spoke with great passion against the economic policies of the US and the World Trade Organization. She is the vice-president of the National Confederation of Indigenous People of Ecuador (CANAIE) who led the fight against dollarization over a year ago. (The US dollar replaced the "sucre" as Ecuador currency.)

Her organization was involved in a recent coup but the "new" government continues to follow the old pro-market policies at the mercy of the multinationals, privatizing public services and obeying the SAP rules (Structural Adjustment Policies), cutting 26,000 public sector jobs and cutting wages for the remaining workers by 50%. She believes the US wants to get rid of the indigenous people who want freedom and land. "Nobody wants war but

we want peace with dignity - for life!"

As the thousands of marchers gathered on Friday, we had to leave. It is a day and a half from Quebec to Dunnville and our Mission Service was on Sunday. On the car radio we heard the first news of the violence at the fence. Tear gas and riot police and plastic bullets make a much better photo op than people sitting and discussing economics. Thirty thousand marchers united in opposition to an agreement signed by the powerful is also impressive, but it was the violent protesters who made the TV news. The nervous police used far too much tear gas but the pictures sold papers.

Later, I did not see one picture of those thousands of peaceful marchers. I felt sad that Canadians would read about the brick thrower rather than Blanca Chancoso from Ecuador. But there was an amazing unity in this leaderless movement, from those called the 'Black Block' with face masks, to those who, after days of work, had drawn up an alternative agreement, and to those who came because they believed in the cause, many of them Christians, and "just had to be there".

I believe that not only will these negotiations affect me in future years, they will have a profound impact on millions of people in our western hemisphere. And the impact could possibly be disastrous unless the leaders in these countries put into their agreement certain conditions which take into account the importance of human dignity and quality of life, human rights, and respect for the environment, especially in the developing countries.

The "Raging Grannies" wrote a few numbers especially for the occasion.

A friendly smile goes along with selling items from Peru.

This won't happen unless pressure is applied and the reasons are convincing. How can the governments be convinced? Quebec showed that if the hard work put into constructive ideas on debt relief, the environment, trade and global economic governance can have some influence on the powers that be, the western world could be a better place.

'Lord, help me now
to think of all who struggle,
whose lives are flooded with care.
To change things in my world,
our world, your world.
And help them to recognize, however faintly,
that you are with them.'

- Eddie Askew

"Gampa" by Gwen Hansford

Grandfather ran his calloused hands through his graying hair as he walked out of the bathroom. He was showered, shaved, and dressed for the Christmas get-together with his family.

"When are they coming?" he asked his wife, gazing out the window.

"They should be here soon," she said, as she carved the turkey.

Grandfather was anxious to see if his granddaughter liked the cradle that he had made for the brand new doll that Grandmother had bought her for Christmas. He had worked many nights to complete the bed for his only grandchild.

Grandfather walked around the extended table to his "lazy boy" chair and turned on the television. His eyes were heavy after the endless hours he had worked that week on the farm. His job kept him busy seven days a week. His eyes closed instantly, and he began to snore.

Two-and-a-half-year-old Brooke ran to her grandfather, her blonde curls bouncing. Energy danced in her large blue eyes. She whispered, "Gampa sleeping!" She climbed up on his lap and he put his arms around her. "Merry Tismas, Gampa!"

"Merry Christmas to you too, Brooke!' he replied.

The family took their places around the table, and bowed their heads while Grandfather said the blessing. Laughter filled the house as they shared the bountiful meal Grandmother had prepared.

Soon they gathered near the Christmas tree to open their presents. Excitedly, Brooke tore the wrapping paper off her presents. She seemed to favour the big box with the pretty doll in it over all her other presents. The cradle sat neglected beside her. The unwanted paper and boxes were placed in a garbage bag and sat in a corner.

Suddenly Brooke began to run around the room, searching frantically.

"Where's my present, Gampa?" the little girl asked with tears running down her cheeks.

"Here's your present," Grandfather said, placing the brand new doll that lay on the floor, in the cradle.

"No, I want my present, my present!" she cried gazing at the garbage bag. Her face was stained with tears.

Grandfather searched through the garbage bag until he came to the box that the doll had been in.

"Is this what you want, Brooke?" he asked.

"My present! Thank you, Gampa!" said Brooke as her tears instantly stopped.

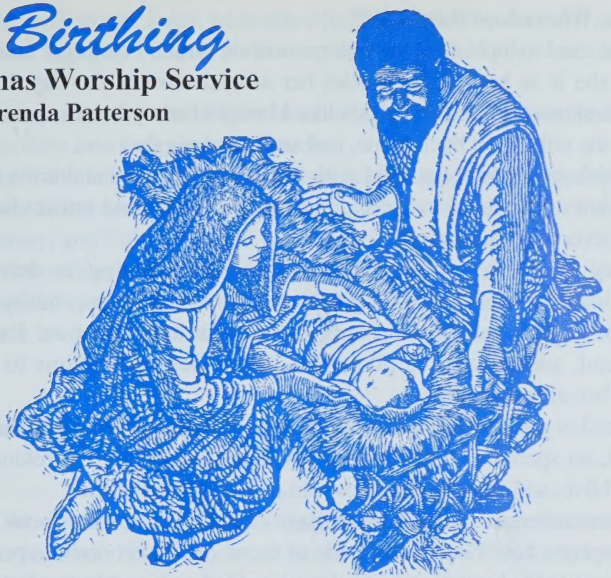
Grandfather found it odd that the big box was more appealing to his granddaughter than the beautiful doll or the cradle, lovingly built with his own two hands.

That night, Grandfather thanked the Lord for allowing him to enjoy yet another Christmas celebration with his family. He asked God to help him remember that simple gifts are often the best gifts to a child. He also thanked God for returning his peace and quiet again!

The Birthing

A Christmas Worship Service

by Jim & Brenda Patterson



The Pattersons are missioners in El Salvador working with the Churches and the Seminary of the Baptist Federation.

Call to Worship: Isaiah 42:1-4 NRSV

Leader: Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.

People: He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice.

Leader: He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth; and the coast lands wait for his teaching.

Scripture: Luke 2: 1-7

Hymn: Comfort, comfort you my people #113 (1997 BOP) may either be sung, or spoken in unison.

Prayer:

A Child: The darkness surrounds me like a blanket. My mother's heart beats like a comforting drum. The waters of life envelop me. I am pushed. I am propelled into the unknown. All I have known is complete, all-encompassing love. Where am I going? What will it be like? O God, in whom I live, I move, I have my being, I pray to you: Be with me. Amen.

Meditation: *What about this Child?*

I am still not used to looking at an undernourished infant. I can't get used to how passive and sleepy she is as her mother carries her around most of the day. I want to buy her vegetables and meat in those little jars like I bought for my babies. I want her to have so much food she will spit it back at me, and smile and giggle.

It still bothers me to see a child with bruises on her face and arms from last night's beating. I want to rush over to her and hug her, and kiss those bruises better, and tell her that it will never happen again.

I still cry when I watch a bright, intelligent child playing, or drawing, or singing, when I realize that this child will likely never have the opportunity to be gainfully employed or to advance further than grade four in her education. I want to give her books to read, and puzzles to play with, and hopes and dreams to dazzle her into developing herself to the utmost.

It still makes me shudder when I look into the eyes of a twelve-year-old girl, and I see no light, no sparkle. I want to open my heart to her heart, to rekindle her flame so that she will live, and flourish and grow old in the fullness of life.

And I remember, as I look at this village of children, at these faces, and bodies, and minds, and spirits, how God became one of these. . . a God born to a poor family, a God with no house, a God needing to be loved, a God vulnerable to abuse, or neglect, or oppression in his family or in his society. And I wonder if God is ever remembering, is ever asking, "What about this child?"

Hymn: What Child is This #161 (1997 BOP)

Prayer:

A Man: O God, I feel so helpless. I hate feeling helpless. I see her pain. I am afraid I will lose her. And what about this child? I need to do something. O God, I don't know what to do! O God, what can I do? Amen.

Meditation: *The Birthing Hands*

I see him walking alongside the road in the first light of dawn. He carries his machete in one hand, and his lunch, one tortilla with salt, in the other. He walks, sometimes for miles, to cut and dig and scrape at the rock-hard earth, to sow the seeds, to hack the weeds, to reap the crop, and to burn the stubble. . . so that he can start the process over again, and over again, and over again.

His face is like leather from the sun and the wind. His hands are cut and dirty. He is thin. He does not smile as I greet him. He nods and he passes.

He works to feed his family. He works to survive. He mostly works for others, for little pay, and long, hard hours.

Sometimes he is sick and cannot work. Everyone goes hungry along with him.

Sometimes he is overcome by the hopelessness of it all. He drinks. And everyone goes hungry along with him.

Sometimes he tries to run away, to another hut, to another woman, to another field, or even to another country. Those he leaves behind go hungry. And nothing else changes.

He teaches his sons how to sharpen the machete. He teaches his sons how to swallow hopes and dreams deep into their empty stomachs.

And I wonder if the helplessness of it all was something like Joseph felt 2000 years ago. I imagine him being forced to walk the length of his country with a very pregnant wife, with no money, and little food, and no place to properly birth the child. I imagine him all alone in that stable, at the hour of the birthing, trying to do for his family as best as he could under the circumstances. And I wonder if God saw his aching desperation and came to guide his rough and battered hands to hold his son as he emerged into a difficult world.

Hymn: The hands that first held Mary's child #158 (1997 BOP)

Prayer:

A Woman: Who am I, God? I am so young. I am so tired. I am so afraid. My pains are getting closer together. And I am so alone. I want to give life. I want to live. God, where are you? Amen.

Meditation: ***Carrying***

The other day, I tried to put one of her baskets on my head to see if I could carry it like she carries it. It was heavy. It weighed at least forty pounds. She laughed as I struggled to balance it so the oranges would not spill out all over me and fall to the ground. I started to laugh with her. We both knew that a woman has to learn how to carry almost as soon as she learns to walk. So it becomes second nature to her. So she does not have to think about it. So nothing will fall.

The three-year-old walks toward us. The basin of masa (corn dough) for the tortillas balances on her head as though it were meant to be there.

The four-year-old crosses the four-lane highway carrying the wood for the tortilla fire, gathered from the bushes. The bundle is heavy. She twists her head under its load, trying to see if it is safe to cross. And then she races to get to the other side. And nothing falls.

The five-year-old comes over to be with us. She is carrying the baby in her arms. A baby carrying a baby. . . It should be a doll with ragamuffin dress and woolen curls.

When she will be ten years old, she will carry the water, a heavy tinaja (jug). She has learned her lessons well. . . not a drop is spilled.

And when she will be fifteen, she will carry new life, a child carrying a child, afraid to drop anything, afraid to run or to jump carelessly for even a second.

I watch her, and I remember Mary. She was so young. She was so brave. Her mother was not there to help her. Not even the partera (mid-wife). And having never had a chance to really live, she gave life. I wonder if God gave her his hand to squeeze, to

almost break. I wonder if God can ever forget the heart beating like a comforting drum, the pain, and then the tender embrace.

Hymn: To a maid whose name was Mary #130 (1997 BOP)

Offering: The offering is for _____ (to be previously determined by the group i.e. WMS work, a work of charity in the local community, or in the world community).

Hymn: during the offering: Lord, you were rich #134 (1997 BOP) or Silent Night #154 (1997 BOP)

Offertory Prayer: Psalm 107:1-9 NRSV
O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, those he redeemed from trouble and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south. Some wandered in desert wastes, finding no way to an inhabited town; hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted within them. Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress; he led them by a straight way, until they reached an inhabited town. Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love, for his wonderful works to humankind. For he satisfies the thirsty, and the hungry he fills with good things. Amen.

Message: ***The eyes***
Jim and I came to El Salvador in 1999 to work with the Baptist Federation Churches as they minister with and to the poor. What we see on a daily basis is almost more than we can process. We go from sitting in a mud hut drinking a suspicious cup of coffee, to passing the Pizza Hut and the Mr. Donut at the entrance to our city.

Christmas here is literally thousands of miles from the Christmas we have always known. True, at the local mall there are lights and trees and carols and bargains. But Santa Claus only exists in the mall and in a few very rich homes.

In the huts of the poor, Santa Claus does not come. On the other hand, Christ is born at any given moment. José (Hosay) walks slowly up the road coming home from the field or the shop. And María births her babies on a grass mat, or in the dirt. She gives thanks to God for life.

Christmas is practically every day in the third world. Life is the gift, and God is the giver. And God, the eternal ruler of the universe, looks at us every day from the eyes of the child, the man, the woman and says, "Of course I remember. . . I am. What you do to the least of these you do to me."

Prayer:

Leader: Let us pray for the Spirit of God to fill us.

ALL: May God's Spirit give us new eyes to see, and new ears to hear the good news of salvation for all people.

Leader: Let us pray for the Spirit of God to guide us.

ALL: May God's Spirit direct our hands, and open our hearts to share ourselves in love for all people.

Leader: Let us pray for the Spirit of God to give us light.

ALL: May God's Spirit enlighten our minds and our thoughts so that we may consider the needs of his beloved children, at Christmas, and every day.

Leader: Let us pray for the Spirit of God to give us peace.

ALL: AMEN and AMEN.

Hymn: O little town of Bethlehem #165 (1997 BOP)

Benediction: (This is the benediction used at the church of the poor in El Refugio, El Salvador.)

Each person stands and faces another person. Each reaches out with both hands to touch the other person's head; all say together: *May God Bless you.*

Move the hands to hold the other person's shoulders and say: *May God protect you.*

Embrace the other person, to the left and to the right and say: *May God give you peace, May God give you peace.*

Did You Know That...?

Christmas Fruit Cake is like birthday cake for Jesus?

Wreaths are circles with no end which the shepherds formed from trees to show us that there is no end to God's love for us. It goes on and on.

Candy Canes are like the shepherd's crooks. Candy canes are flavoured with peppermint or hyssop, the herb used in flavouring or as medicine in the very early years.

Star: the Christmas star shone down on the baby Jesus, Joseph and Mary. It is seen in the eastern sky at Christmas. Look for it.

Candles are the source of light. God wanted the world to know beauty and light so he sent Jesus to be our teacher.

Red Roses at Christmas are symbols of the sheer beauty of flowers everywhere from cultivated ones down to wild flowers in the woods and meadows, gifts from God.

Lights on trees and houses signify that Jesus brought light to the world.

- Thanks to Norma Tomlinson for this information.

Gwyneth Whilsmith

A woman of many gifts and an inspiring writer

by Maria Stam

Behind most published books there are authors whose personal views are reflected in their works. Gwyneth Whilsmith's writings are more than reflections. I was especially moved by her remarkable openness and honesty in her autobiographical book *Basket of Stones*.

This work reveals her outlook on life and her philosophical and spiritual insights. Encouraged by her great desire for the truth, so rare in contemporary society, she discloses her internal struggles and the importance of faith in daily living.

Gwyneth was born in 1923 to Charlotte and Alex Cann in Brock, Saskatchewan. Growing up in a loving family as the youngest of four children, she adored her father whose calmness and deep faith affected her greatly. But her happy childhood on the large farm, surrounded by the wide open landscape of the prairies, was strongly influenced by the Depression. She calls herself "a child of the Depression."

The long-lasting drought, accompanied by devastating dust-storms, made the situation in the prairies worse. In her book *Hear the Pennies Dropping* she describes in lively details these dreadful years. They shattered the dreams of many young farming families. On the positive side, she observed the closeness of the community, expressed in compassion and kindness toward neighbours in need.

At one point she writes, "Life was very simple in small grey houses, but despite their humble appearance these houses radiated the kind of warm welcome that could not be surpassed by a millionaire's castle."

In 1938, at the age of fifteen, Gwyneth moved with her family to Ontario. She attended high school in Grand Valley, Dunnville, and finally in Exeter, where the family settled and her father established a feed and grain business. After graduation and a brief office employment in Toronto, she started working in her father's business.

Married to Art Whilsmith in 1945, she became the mother of three children, Jo Anne, Robert, and Braden and some years later they adopted a daughter, Anita. Her busy life did not prevent her from finding time to serve the Presbyterian Church, beginning as a Sunday school teacher. In the fifties she was appointed superintendent and leader of youth.

Her employment as a reporter, columnist, and editor of a weekly newspaper provided the opportunity to develop her writing skills. In spite of the many activities outside the family, Gwyneth's motherly responsibility and love for the children never faded.

From her own experiences she knows about the difficulties of motherhood - instead of smooth sailing, it often can mean

struggling against strong undercurrents of societal influences. In *Baskets of Stones* she speaks of "some wilderness time," revealing the heartaches and worries about a son who chose directions contrary to her own principles and values. Despite disillusions she never gave in to despair; she found support in her strong faith, providing her time and again with new hope and confidence.

Using stones as symbolism for steadfastness and endurance, her views of life are realistic, but her descriptions are interwoven with meaningful observations and spiritual reflections that inspire readers to find a way of bringing their own everyday life in harmony with their relationship with God.

Throughout the above book, and another devotional work *I Know God's in Here Somewhere,* she uses her extensive knowledge and love of scriptures, obtained through participation in bible studies and encouraged by a trip to Israel. When she says "God's in here somewhere" the reader discovers that God is in every page of this recommendable collection of devotions.

God is present in the bible passages, the related human happenings and the meaningful prayers at the end of each section. Years of serving the church, and as an ordained Elder of the Presbyterian Church, enable her to combine scriptural passages with pastoral insights in relation to everyday happenings. This devotional book benefits all who use it for personal, spiritual enrichment, or within groups for discussions and reflections.

In addition to these three books, Gwyneth Whilsmith also wrote: *Blessings,* a little book of graces and *From Granny's Kitchen,* a collection of her grandmother's recipes. Her straightforward and down-to-earth writing shies away from lavish language and pretense.

While I am touched by her wisdom, honesty and religious devotion, she urges me not to make her "one of my saints." I agree and admit, her life is rooted in the here and now. However, her love of nature and the earth always includes faith and spirituality as sources of strength on her life's journey.

Someone to Care

Have you ever looked into a puddle,
And seen your reflection there,
And wondered if there was someone
Who loved you and really did care?

Have you ever gone out for a walk alone,
And mused in the drizzling rain -
Then wondered, if there was someone
Who felt your depression and pain?

Have you ever looked up at the starry sky,
And questioned the God above -
To ask if there was someone
Who could come and show you some love?

Have you ever thought about Calvary
And of Jesus' suffering there?
If you have, then you know someone
Who loves you and really does care!

R. W. Unger

Program

Margaret Robertson
Program Secretary

Gifts - A Workshop in Three Parts

This workshop is designed for two one-hour sessions and one half-hour session. You may choose to do them at three different occasions or in a one-day retreat/meeting. Times noted for each section are only suggestions. Please feel free to adapt to your individual situation and needs.

This material was sent to Presbyterial and Synodical Adult and Report Secretaries in August. It has also been posted on our Web page: www.presbyterian.ca/wms

Called to Witness looks at our call to mission. ***What are Your Gifts?*** focuses on identifying our gifts within community and ***Sharing Our Gifts*** encourages us to find the practical ways we can use our gifts.

A. Called To Witness (One Hour)

1. **Open with a Centering Exercise**. (5 minutes)
(Ask each person to sit comfortably and quietly, to imagine a calm place. Pause until the room is totally quiet and participants have had a minute or so to prepare to hear scripture.)

2. **Read** Mark 16:1-8 NRSV (10 minutes)
(Read individually first, then have someone read to the whole group.)

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb? When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you." So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

3. **Commentary** (2-5 minutes)

In this story of the resurrection, women are prominent. What has happened to the

twelve disciples? After the twelve chosen disciples have either fled, betrayed, or denied Jesus and after he has died alone, surrounded only by the mocking crowds, the author introduces a group of women.

Women were mentioned earlier in Mark's Gospel but this is the first time we hear of a group that has remained loyal when the twelve disciples have not. Only Pilate and the centurion remain in the story to the end. All other characters are new.

If we understand discipleship as those being sent out, there are many disciples in the Bible, both men and women.

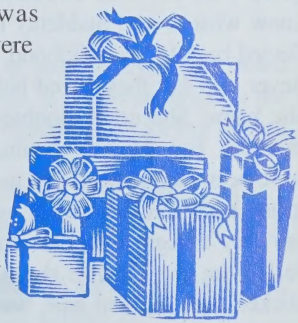
In Jesus' time, women kept their distance from public sites of crucifixion and burial. What is it that compels these women to seek out the tomb? When they did arrive, they were afraid to speak publicly but they did speak personally to the disciples.

Ancient writing was intended to do many things, to make people act or believe or change their behaviour, not just to entertain them with a nice story ending. Mark challenges both women and men to action, to become faithful disciples, carrying the message to the world.

In this account of the resurrection, insiders become outsiders and the outsiders do the work of the insiders. All may have seemed silenced momentarily but they go on to find their voices and to witness.

4. Imagine What the Women Experienced

Discuss first in groups of 2 or 3 (10 minutes), then share some of your thoughts with the whole group (10 minutes): I wonder...; Who was there...what did they say...what did they see...what were their questions?



Describe the women. What were their characteristics?

What kind of women would care enough to come?

Why would they care?

Why were they afraid to tell?

What did they do when they left?

How did this effect their faith, their life, their relationship with other followers of Jesus?

5. Respond

a) Individually (10 minutes) - Ask each person to respond to what they have thought and learned. Perhaps they might sketch a design, jot down key words, write a poem or words for a song, write a psalm or a story, find one or two people to share their thoughts with, or wander away to a quiet place for reflection.

b) Whole Group (10 minutes) - Talk about why you chose your activity. Talk about what you learned during your activity. What is God calling you to do?

Gimme a Hug Mom!

by Eve Stickland

Nine-year-old Willy was playing with his baseball cards in his room when he saw his mother approaching.

"Hey Ma! Do you love me?"

"Of course I do. Surely you know that. Why do you ask?"

"You never tell me. Why don't you say it?"

"I thought you knew."

"No I don't. My friend Jed's Mom tells him all the time. And hugs him too. How come you never hug me?"

MaryLou looked surprised. She fidgeted with her blue sweater. She didn't know what to say. Suddenly her mind reflected back to her childhood. Her parents never told her they loved her either. Yet she knew. She never doubted it for one moment. But she had to admit, it would have been nice to hear. She just took it for granted. She remembered hearing them say they thought it would spoil a child to tell them they loved them. MaryLou slicked back her red hair, bent down and wrapped her loving arms around her son and looked deeply into his troubled eyes.

"Aren't you happy?"

"Yes, but . . ."

"Don't I treat you well?"

"Sure you do Ma."

"Well, what's wrong then?"

"I'd just like to hear you say it, that's all."

"My love for you is like God's. Unconditional. That means, no matter what you do, I will always love you."

"Honest, Mom?"

MaryLou nodded and wiped the tears from her swollen eyes and drew her son close to her heart.

"I promise to do better, OK?"

As she stood up she looked down into his sweet young face.

"I love you with all my heart. You are a precious gift from God."

Willy looked up into his mother's kind eyes and wrapped his small thin arms around his mother's waist and gave her a big hug.

"Do you feel better now?"

He wiped the moisture from his nose and nodded.

"I love you too, Mom."

"How about another hug?"

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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

MINUTE FOR JUSTICE

Shalom

Shalom, the biblical word for peace has a rich meaning. It is linked to prosperity and security,

> My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places. Isaiah 32:1

It is linked with righteousness,

> The effect of righteousness will be peace and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever. Isaiah 32:17

It is linked with justice, especially for the poor. The Psalmist knows peace is a gift from God through the ruler and prays:

> Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a king's son. May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice. Psalm 72:1-2

Peace involves more than a revolution in the human affairs of a country. What is needed is a revolution of the human heart. The apostle Paul writes:

> Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 5:1

Today many countries are in times of transition, times of uncertainty, which breed fear and conflict. The IAC report looks at such transitions. It draws attention to the plight of children affected by war. The authors look for opportunities for our church to be actively involved in peace efforts. Why? Paul wrote:

> All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:18

The *ministry of reconciliation* is our mandate. As Christians we are bound to do what ever we can, so that peace may abound and justice flow like a river.

This **Minute for Justice** is based on *Seeking Shalom in Times of Transition* the report of the International Affairs Committee to the 127th General Assembly, June 2001. The full report is found in Acts & Proceedings 2001.

Minute for Justice may be read as a Minute for Mission, or printed as a bulletin insert or newsletter article to inform members of the international concerns of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and ask for their prayerful consideration of these matters. The text was written by Dineke Kraay, member of the International Affairs Committee as representative of the Women's Missionary Society.

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2001-2002 Mission Study, The Presbyterian Church in Canada
The Mission Study stands alone very easily, but we include two resources to enhance or extend your experience:

God's People, God's Planet: Living Lightly on the Earth by Erin Crisfield. G8126 $12.00
Nature has always had a spiritual connection and is an instinctive place to go to learn more about God, His love and ourselves. The six sessions of this study provide the opportunity to reflect on God's creation, and to explore scripture's teachings about our relationship with the earth.

In the process you will learn more about the natural world and discover ways to reduce our impact on the earth. All sessions have Bible study, prayers, hymn suggestions, discussions, stories and creative activities. Instructions are given so that group members can share the role of group leader.

Earth Age, A New Vision of God, the Human and the Earth by Lorna Green. Paulist Press. G7138 $14.75

Using metaphysics, spirituality and ecology, Lorna Green examines how our perspective of the universe is affecting our attitudes toward the earth, resulting in our failure to take responsibility for the crisis on the earth. She proposes that we re-establish a primeval intimacy between humans and the natural world.

Earth Prayers From Around the World, 365 Prayers, Poems, and Invocations for Honoring the Earth, edited by Elizabeth Roberts and Elias Amidon. Harper San Francisco. G5652 $23.50
In every religion, we find the need to honour God's creation—the natural world—and this is especially evident among native peoples, who have been wiser with the earth gifts. This collection is a celebration of this kinship, with contributions from many sources: the Bible, Inuit songs, U.N. Environmental Sabbath Program, Julian of Norwich, Ojibway prayer, Albert Schweitzer, Thich Nhat Hanh, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Hermann Hesse, Hildegard of Bingen, Walt Whitman, an eleven-year-old child, and Emily Dickinson, just to touch on a few.

Reading these prayers for public devotion or for personal meditation renews our respect for God's world.

Reviewed by Susan Clarke.

24 Ready-to-Use Programs for Women's Groups by Dorothy MacNeill. G8139 $16.95

These user-friendly programs are thoughtful and creative. Each chapter includes how to prepare, the call to worship, a prayer, a hymn suggestion, a suggested scripture reading, a reflection, the program, and a closing. The programs are designed for every season and can be used as they are or adapted. The program for Christmas focused on babies and was, in particular, quite moving. Not the traditional feel-good service, it recognized the struggles and isolation that people may feel even more acutely this time of year. Reviewed by Susan Clarke.

And the Aspens Whisper, Listening for God in Nature's Cathedral by David Webber. Webber Ink Publishing. G8321 $17.95

In his second book, after *From Under a Blazing Aspen*, David Webber's storytelling continues full of humour and humanity. He finds God's lessons in the gifts of nature found in the wilderness and mountains around him.

The stories make the words of the Bible speak clearly as Webber teaches us to listen and hear God's voice in the whispering aspens. One story in particular is timely, although it was written before the tragedy of Sept. 11.

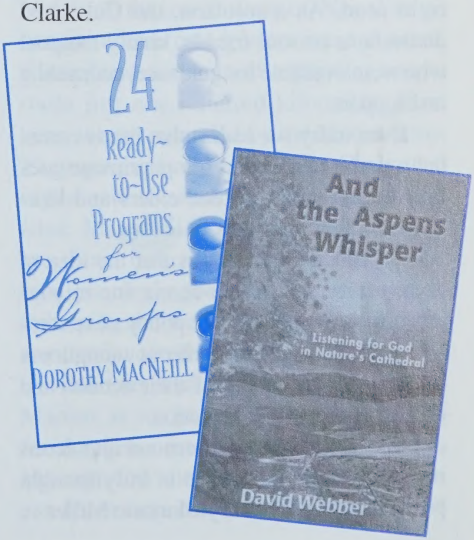
In "Remembrance Hope", the vicious hunt of a coyote reminds the author that humans are capable of the worst kinds of violence and that "we have learned precious little about peace and have developed hardly any capacity to keep it." He finds hope in a God of peace, quoting Psalm 46 to give evidence that God is ultimately more powerful than warring humanity. Reviewed by Susan Clarke.

Expecting God's Surprises, Devotions for the Advent Journey by Robert Dunham. Geneva Press. $9.50

New from Wood Lake Books and Geneva Press, this book prepares us for the Advent season with daily meditations drawn from the suggested lectionary scriptures for years A, B, and C.

Simplify and Celebrate, Embracing the Soul of Christmas by Alternatives. G5438 $21.25

I love Christmas and I love to celebrate it, but every year, by the time the 25th arrives, dropping from exhaustion and staring at an empty wallet, I often feel I've missed the mark and believe there must be a simpler and less commercial way. This is a great resource to return to the important values, chock full of useful ideas and means to get back to the joy and peace of the Christmas season. Reviewed by Susan Clarke.



Celtic Christian Communities by Ian Bradley. Northstone Publishing. Kelowna, BC.

The Christian overlay resulting from the Roman conquest left a deep and lasting grip on the Celtic consciousness, but has rarely been a subject of popular discussion. However, in his fourth book about Celtic Christian attitudes and activities, Dr. Bradley, senior lecturer in practical theology, University of St. Andrews, deals in considerable detail with monastic life and its relevance to clerical burnout in the modern world.

He makes the point that greater use of individual talents among teams of lay people and ordained persons operating out of a central church within a neighbourhood might mutually support the workers and be of greater efficiency in meeting local needs.

He explains that such complexes were viewed in Celtic times as colonies of Heaven whose members were *in* but not *of* the world in which they worked. Life was seen as a pilgrimage to the Eternal Shrine, with all a pilgrim's problems in keeping to the right road. As a solution, the Celts had *anamchara* or soul friends, kindly mentors who were available for guidance, counseling and support.

Even today we realize that life is essentially a solo path, and as our pilgrimage goes on, we lean on ministers, elders and like-minded fellow travellers.

Dr. Bradley reminds us that the idea of community service to atone for misdemeanors is not new. Celtic policy of restorative justice sought to confront wongdoers with the consequences of their actions and urged them to change direction.

The chapter on modern secular icons replacing traditional saints is truly thought provoking. Reviewed by Marjorie Miller.

Forward in Faith

It is Labour Day as I write this - and as I read the Daily Devotional on the Web one of the Scripture readings "spoke" to me - Psalm 127:1 - "Unless the Lord builds the house they labour in vain who build it". We could substitute WMS for "house" couldn't we - as we labour together to tell the good news - to fulfill our purpose. We need to do as the apostle John writes in his first letter 1 John 1: 3 - "we proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us". Let us all try to do this - be the catalyst for mission in our own congregations - tell the story - spread the word.

Remind your congregation that the Mission Study is for all in the Presbyterian Church in Canada. It is such a timely message to all of us to appreciate the world that God has given and to take care of it.

Thank you to all who have agreed to be Treasurer this year - taking that responsibility and sending your money in regularly is very important as we try to look after the financial responsibilities of our Society. Thanks to our Treasurer, Giollo Kelly and to Jeannette Whynotte in the WMS office for all they do to keep us informed and to keep the records in order.

Thank you to everyone for your financial support, and for your prayers for the ongoing work and witness of our Society. I would like to wish you all the blessings of the Christmas Season. As we thank God for the gift of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, may we share this gift with others. Let us go forward in faith into 2002 - knowing that the future is something God alone can know.

Joanne Instance, President WMS

MISSION IN ACTION

Ferdnando Cascante
Costa Rica (USA)

I just returned from my trip to Cuba early this week and I am catching up on mail and work. The trip to Cuba with Barbara [Nawratil, Deputation, Life and Mission Agency] was very fruitful both for her and for me. We contacted people and churches that were very interested in my return to lead activities in Christian Education.

I was already invited to visit in January and July next year. I was also in El Salvador for eight days at the beginning of July, not only teaching a course at the Baptist Seminary (13 people) but also leading workshops for three churches in FEBES (total of 75 people).

Before my trip to El Salvador, I also led a full weekend workshop for pastors and leaders in FIEC (over 50 people participated). In the middle of November I will be going to Guatemala to lead two workshops: one for the Fraternity of Mayan Women and one for the Presbyterian Seminary.

The family is doing well. This fall Anayancy is going to be a junior and David a freshman in High School. Xiomara will be starting a course at a Community College here and is looking forward to getting her "green card". That will allow her to work outside the house (she wants to work part-time). The visa we have allows only me to work, but the Seminary here has requested a green card for each of us.

Peace,

Fernando

Schwarz
Pokhara, Nepal

August 2001 - If you pay attention to the news you will know already that this has been a very eventful few months for everyone here in Nepal. We seem to be in a bit of a lull in activity now, thank God.

The Maoist "People's War" has continued unabated, with over one hundred policemen held as hostages now and hundreds killed so far this year. Bank robberies, police post bombings and political assassinations are commonplace now. Much of the rural west of Nepal is no longer under real government control. Even Tatopani, part of a popular tourist route just one hundred kilometers from here, is now occupied by the Maoist army. They are generally opposed to foreign aid organizations, and with some good reasons. Many "aid" organizations actually are more interested in promoting their own country's goods and personnel than in helping the recipient country, and many are also involved in "cronyism."

INF has had little trouble from the Maoists as we have had a good reputation for doing honest community-based work, although INF did have to withdraw workers from one district (Myagdhi). Old

acquaintances of ours from language school days one month ago were forced from their house at night at gunpoint after which their house was burned. It was traumatic for their two kids. We still plan on running surgical camps in Myagdhi this year - please pray for these. A recent INF camp in another district encountered some trouble from Maoists there.

The royal family massacre, of course, had a profound effect on the country. Two weeks of mourning followed when virtually all business ground to a halt. There have been deep suspicions of how this happened and who did it. The new king Gyanendra does not appear to be fully accepted by the people. This is very significant in the political equation as the former king was very popular and was not spoken against by the Maoists, who now speak openly against the monarchy. The king is still a powerful figure as the army answers only to him. The local church has been turning to God in this situation.

Work-wise we have done two more plastic surgical camps this year. Dr. Sharma is progressing well, and I hope to send him to the States for more training next year. We had an excellent time in April in Beni, where we were overwhelmed with over 400 patients.

We were able to operate on about 30, and referred about 80 more needing more complex surgery or rehabilitation to Pokhara for treatment. I am still working my way through them. It is a great privilege to be able to help so many of the poor with disabilities. I am often struck by the high calibre of the rehab team I get to work with here.

I have camps in Jumla, Lalguad, Surkhet and Beni planned for the rest of this year. My lectures in England at the Pulvertaft Hand Centre were well received and I made contact with some fine Christian hand surgeons who may be of help to Nepal in the future.

At the government hospital we are short of anaesthetists, and now our anaesthetist at Green Pastures Hospital has left to work at the government one. One comes from England in just a few days until the end of the year, which is a real answer to prayer, but we need a permanent one next year.

Tek Raj has been with us in Green Pastures for three months now. He has never walked in his 17 years due to severe malformations of his legs. When he came to us he was one depressed kid, and his father abandoned him here after dropping him off. Now after two operations and physiotherapy we are just now getting his brace and prosthesis made, and starting him walking! He has a much happier attitude now that I

Overseas Staff Birthdays

JANUARY
5 - Aron Csaba Pandy-Szekeres, Hungary
6 - Anna Szabo (Pandy-Szekeres), Hungary
6 - David Cascante Sanchez (USA)
10 - David Pandy-Szekeres, Hungary
13 - Caleb Lessard-Clouston, Japan

FEBRUARY
5 - Philip Barsoum, Cyprus (Canada)
12 - Christopher Barsoum, Cyprus
13 - Xiomara Sanchez Cascante (USA)
21 - Anayancy Cascante Sanchez

pray stays with him all his days.

We have had some good family times over the monsoon holidays in July. It was good to spend time swimming, playing board games and reading together as a family. The kids flourished during the holidays, growing inches as they are passing birthday milestones. It warms our hearts as parents to see them playing, laughing and being best friends. God has blessed them with an awareness of Him.

We pray that they would grow in maturity of faith and knowledge of Christ Jesus. We see glimpses of their faith in action now and then, and wish for more. Ling and her prayer partners have been praying specifically for their children in the past months and already are seeing God move.

The group of students continues to meet here every Sunday evening. We are going through Genesis now. There are some really keen students in the group who just soak it up, and teach me as well. Pray for the youth here. Those who are second generation are like teenagers in Canada, some apathetic, some keen, a few against. This is a real shocker to those parents who suffered so much for the cause of Christ and now see some of their kids take it so casually.

We were in Kathmandu in July for combined work and holiday, and were able to worship with our old church there. It was great to see how some of the young men have matured in Christ and taking on more leadership positions.

One young fellow whom we helped to start a furniture shop has now employed five young men, some from the church. Two of these men previously were real derelicts so it is good to see them working well and leading lives worthy of Christ.

Mahendra, whom we had been helping with school and boarding has now gone back to live with his father. (His father had been in jail during which time we helped him stay with some friends of ours.) He really loved his time with our friends and at church, and is finding it hard back in the village now. In his place we are supporting another "prison child" with the same family.

We are learning what it is to depend on God for the future. In the uncertainty of the future we know that He is certain. "The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock in whom I take refuge".

In His grace,

Richard and Ling, Jonathon, Daniel and Christina

A Note from InterServe:

Five little words possess the potential to change everything - "I'll be praying for you." Suddenly, you don't have to carry your burden alone. Someone is offering to stand in the gap to bombard heaven's gates on your behalf. Having friends who take seriously Scripture's instruction to pray for one another is one of life's greatest blessings and insurance plans! Although one person's prayers may be fervent, we are also told that if "one can put a thousand to flight, two can put ten thousand to flight."

We need to address today's situation in Nepal with fervent prayer. One, two, ten or more of us need to say to Richard and Ling, "I'll be praying for you" during these days of national uncertainty and tension. Their burden could be significantly decreased if they knew that you and I were standing in the gap, praying for them and for the country of Nepal. Will you commit specific prayer to them over these next few months? Why not drop them a note at rshwarz@inf.org.np

Thank you for your strategic partnership in this way,

Charlene de Haan, Human Resources

Barsoum
Canada & Cyprus

Christian greetings from Canada!

Our family had a busy summer in Cyprus and Canada. School has begun once again and our family gathered together in Canada for the whole month of September. As usual, we deliver to you our prayer and newsletter that covers our family news and that of SAT-7's ministry.

Sherien spent the summer helping at SAT-7 in Cyprus and Lebanon reviewing many potential programs for SAT-7 broadcast, helping with the children's programs, and conducting some research for future production of women programs. She is now back to school starting her final year of Journalism at Ryerson University. She will be spending six weeks in training at CTV as part of her academic requirement.

Philip worked hard throughout this summer after completing his evening courses at Ryerson University. He was accepted this fall in the Information Technology Management program, a four-year program that leads to a Bachelor of Commerce.

Christopher completed grade 6 and had a busy summer camping and winning soccer games! He resumed schooling in Canada in grade 7 at The Yorkland Christian School.

Mona continued to be based in Canada to provide a home for Sherien, Philip and Christopher. In July, she finished her volunteer occasional help at InterServe office. She also organized the 28th Chapel Place Presbyterian Church (our home church) Annual Arabic Speaking Conference which was held in June 29-July 2 at Queens University, Kingston, Ontario. Over two hundred people from Canada and the US attended, with speakers from Egypt and Palestine.

Makram's overseas work assignment during the last three months included extensive travel in the Middle East and in North America. He continues to direct the Audience & Church Relations, manage interimly SAT-7 acquisitions, and oversee the SAT-7 broadcast schedule (the Grid).

Here are the PRAISE and PRAYER items for our family and SAT-7 Ministry:

Praise God for SAT-7 being on-air for more than five years. Praise Him as He called our family to be part of this ministry over the last five years as well. Pray for the urgently needed personnel, including an Acquisitions Manager to handle program acquisitions.

Praise God for SAT-7's expanded ministry that now includes a digital channel available for broadcasting 24 hours a day seven days a week. Currently SAT-7 transmits 10 hours a day. Pray that production could increase to use the full capacity of the channel.

Mona, Makram & family

Patterson
El Salvador

June 2001 - Throughout March, April and May, the Federation has been preoccupied trying to establish a workable plan for building new houses to benefit the earthquake victims. We have tried to set as our goal that 2000 houses would be built over

the next two-three years. With each house costing in the neighbourhood of $4000 CDN, that's a lot of praying and hoping. Given that over one million families have been left homeless or in unsafe dwellings, our goal is a mere drop in the bucket.

A party of workers from Knox, Listowel, ON is due to arrive early in September to build two houses in El Refugio. Two other congregations are scheduled for 2002 to do the same.

Please pray for the earthquake victims, not only here, but also in India where the conditions of poverty are even worse than in El Salvador.

The balance of the work continues. In March, Jim started to accompany a new mission called "Compassionate God in Ahuachapan (about 45 minutes southwest of Santa Ana). The pastor, Felix Lino, a minister with 15 years experience in new church development, left his charge about a year ago to begin working with the community. To date, he has gathered a flock of some 30 adults and young people, and about a dozen children. Last month the Mission requested formal association with the Baptist Federation. Jim is currently leading basic Bible Introduction studies with the group.

For the next couple of months, this group's focus will be the house building project. After that, the major thrust will be leadership development, adult literacy, and a community census to determine which of the multitude of crying needs the small church will address in the name of Jesus.

In Sonsonate, "Redeemer Christ Church, an established congregation of some 50 adult and youth members and children, decided in May to request membership in the Baptist Federation. Pastor Rigoberto Gomez, always a friend of the Federation, has been with Cristo Redentor since its beginning 18 years ago. The congregation's focus is on "creating stable families . Jim and the deacons are in dialogue over how to help the church expand its reach into the community.

Both Brenda and Jim are involved in the Basic Education project at El Refugio. Brenda teaches English, art, and Jim teaches vocal music and works with the parents of the children. Even though there are many headaches, the joy of seeing the children and the parents making some progress makes it worthwhile. Brenda will be starting a sewing class for some of the mothers (the roof and the machines now having been repaired thanks to women from First Thunder Bay). The hope is that they can master enough skill to be able to bring in a bit more income for their families.

Brenda & Jim

**The General Assembly,
The Presbyterian Church in
Taiwan**

SUBJECT: Typhoon Toraji
TO: Partner Churches and Related Organizations

3 August 2001 - During the last couple of days we have received several messages from our partners overseas expressing your concern and conveying your prayer support following the recent Typhoon Toraji that struck Taiwan.

Undoubtedly, many of you have followed the international media news

reports while others indicate having received our Taiwan Church News "E-bulletin." The impact of Toraji island-wide was not as strong as predicted. Still, the damage left in its wake proved critical. At time of writing the death toll stands at 80 and 36 injured, while hope wanes concerning finding survivors among the 132 listed missing.

Major road damage and flooding has made the task of assessing the true state of village communities extremely difficult. Power outages and telecommunication links cut off, including mobile phones, have hampered the progress.

A subtropical island, Taiwan is no stranger to typhoon conditions nor indeed earthquakes and tremors. However, the land continues to "hurt and groan" having not had time to recover from the devastating '921 earthquake' experienced less than two years ago.

Consequently each new disaster and natural calamity brings more stress and pain which the land increasingly finds hard to deal with. The rain fall generated by Typhoon Toraji caused great floods and landslides comprised of rocks and mud which affected, for the most part, Hualien County and Nantou County - the Eastern and Central agricultural areas of Taiwan. We need not remind you these are the same regions which took the brunt of the 921 earthquakes.

The General Assembly called together a PCT Typhoon Toraji Emergency Committee on 1 August 2001 to evaluate the situation and see what further steps could be taken by the church. We realize our unique situation due to our permanent network and in addition are able to utilize the facilities of the 921 reconstruction centres established in the earthquake torn areas. Experience has taught us much.

Complicated by these conditions the long term evaluation process continues. For the immediate and initial stage of rescue and assistance the PCT Typhoon Toraji Emergency Committee has undertaken the measures which include establishing rescue and aid stations in eight locations, providing immediate financial aid for the suffering families and individual victims; asking congregations to pray for the victims and communities and to take a special offering for the Toraji Typhoon Relief Work.

On behalf of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan and the people of our nation we sincerely thank you for your assurance of prayers and expressions of solidarity and caring. We invite your constituent members to pray with us for wisdom and strength in our efforts to reach out as an instrument of love and healing in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ during these challenging times. With our warm greetings and appreciation,

Rev. Yabu Syat
Moderator, 47th General Assembly;
Rev. Chuang Shu-Chen (Susan)
Associate General Secretary

NEW MISSION STAFF APPOINTMENTS

Sylvie Babarik

Sylvie, presently working with CTV in Montreal, has been appointed as a volunteer for one year to COVERCO in Guatemala. She will be working alongside

Ken Kim. She is a member of St. Andrew & St. Paul's, Montreal.

Ms. Babarik, a professional journalist and writer, will bring to COVERCO skills needed to strengthen their capacity to prepare reports in English. Her gifts will enable COVERCO to meet the need for more monitors by recruiting and training skilled persons in Guatemala.

COVERCO'S program is to monitor the impact of the global economy on Guatemalan workers and promote a culture of compliance built on the rule of law. This is a unique opportunity to explore together new challenges on the cutting edge of mission.

Oliver and Dorothy Zorgdragger

Oliver and Dorothy are members of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Stratford. Oliver is a retired construction worker and has done volunteer work in Guatemala.

They plan to go to India in the fall for a couple of months in response to a request to supervise the building of the latrines at the Village Development Offices in Jobat. Pauline Brown is delighted that Dorothy is willing to help her get the mission files in India in order.

Louise Gamble

Many of you may know Louise as she is a Diaconal Minister and has been on the appendix to the Roll of East Toronto Presbytery for many years. She is a member of St. Mark's Presbyterian Church, Don Mills.

Louise has been appointed for a two-year volunteer term to Taiwan to teach English and Bible at the Presbyterian Bible College in HsinChu. She will continue the work of Marlene Buwalda who has just completed her two-year term.

Louise began her overseas career in Taiwan in 1965 and served until 1973. She has an excellent command of Mandarin Chinese.

For the past number of years Louise has been in a private clinical practice as a psychotherapist. She is a graduate of Ewart College as well as the Ontario Bible College.

Soo-Hwan Chung & Si-Kyoung Lee

Photo: Florence Ross

Soo-Hwan Chung & Si-Kyoung Lee

Soo-Hwan has been in Canada studying ESL since last summer and has recently married Si-Kyoung Lee from Korea. She joined him in May.

The Orientation program is also for people who come to Canada to help them adjust to their new home and culture.

Soo-Hwan is a Leadership Development Student from the Korean Christian Church in Japan, and will remain in Canada until November.

Marlene Peck

Marlene is from Knox Presbyterian Church in Goderich, Ontario. She has been appointed for one year as a volunteer

to Bandwe Secondary School in Livingstonia Synod, Malawi in response to an urgent request from the Education Department of the Synod.

Marlene joined members of her congregation in a trip to Nicaragua last year. She has a background in Early Childhood Education and in health care. She has recently been an Educational Assistant in a grade two classroom for the local school board working especially with children that are physically challenged.

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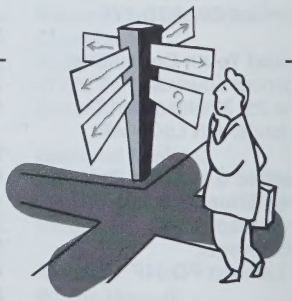

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Annemarie Klassen - Education for Discipleship (Stewardship and Mission Education)
Stephen Allen - Justice Ministries
Richard Fee - Presbyterian World Service and Development
Keith Knight - Resource Production and Communication

NEWS

Social Crisis Hits Nicaragua Hard

September 11, 2001-The following is a comment on the current social situation in Nicaragua. It was taken from "News from UPOLI", the English language publication of UPOLI, the Polytechnic University of Nicaragua. You will recall that Viola Duff continues to be very closely connected with the nursing school of UPOLI. It is a college of the Baptist Federation of Nicaragua. This is a good summary. - Marjorie Ross

A Difficult Electoral Year

A few months before the November national elections the social crisis is almost unbearable. Rises in the cost of public transportation have provoked public protests and the suspension of the service. Falling coffee prices on the international market has hurt the Nicaraguan economy. It has caused a debt crisis for coffee producers with the banking system, including threat of seizures and loss of their properties. In addition, the operation of the Supreme Electoral Council has been paralyzed by a political crisis, which is a threat to the electoral process itself. The rise in the cost of living in Nicaragua is about 25% so far this year.

While the political propaganda of the three main political parties: Conservative, Liberal and Sandinista has already begun, the urgency of strengthening the democratic process becomes more than evident. The political polarization and the high degrees of corruption shown by government officials, have resulted in the loss of reliability in the state as, supposedly, the guarantor and organizer of the common good.

It is urgent that more Nicaraguans speak out about jobs, health, education and the environment. Also, negotiations with international financial organizations are needed so that our exports don't go to foreign debt payments, and so that better prices are applied to our exports, especially coffee.

Only in this way we will be able to speak of a true democracy in Nicaragua.

Millennium Quilt Exhibit 2001-2002

Nov 12 - Dec 7: Knox College, Toronto, Ontario
Jan 3 - 24 - St. Mark's Presbyterian Church, Toronto (Don Mills), Ontario
Feb 1 - 20 - St. James Presbyterian Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba
Mar 1 - 17 - Hopedale Presbyterian Church, Oakville, Ontario
Apr 1-24 - First Presbyterian Church, Brockville, Ontario

Fascinating Facts from the Bible Compiled by Eve Stickland

Did you know...

Noah was 601 years old when the flood waters dried up?

Holy Bible, New Living Translation. Genesis 8:13-14

Ascent

Lord, I look up to the sky:
The grey clouds hide your face,
So I begin to run up the mountain
To find you,
And I call out your name.

My heart could not see you, Lord.
My pain was too heavy,
And I didn't let you carry it.
I cried out with tears as I started to walk,
And I kept asking you why.

If you are the Almighty,
Then why?
If you can perform miracles,
Then why not?
If you really love me,
Why?

The mountain seemed too high
And the road too long,
To not know if I would find you up there;
And I wanted to turn around,
And go downhill.

Lord, at that moment I hated you.
I stopped climbing,
And I cursed you for taking her away.
At a standstill,
I did not want to find you.

But you are the Almighty, and you stayed with me,
Why?
You didn't leave my side,
While I was running away.
Why not?
I know you really love me,
But why?

Lord, I felt you grab my hand,
To help me climb that mountain.
I heard you whisper in my ear,
And I began to praise your name,
As I started again, uphill.

I put my hands behind my head
And thanked you for carrying the cross.
My legs ached,
But still I ran,
And thanked you for going up that mountain for me.

Lord, you are the Almighty,
And it doesn't matter why.
You created her,
And I give her to you,
And thank you for the miracle,
The chance to see her again.

At that moment,
I was almost at the top,
And I gave you my pain.
And stopped asking you why,
And I thanked you for the very thing
I hated you for.

At the top of the hill,
I fell to my knees
With a broken heart.
The clouds parted and the sun came out,
And there you were Lord,
Sitting right beside me,
Wiping my tears away.

Rachel Virgin

Rachel Virgin is a student at the University of Western Ontario, London, taking her Masters in occupational therapy. She wrote the poem above after her sister died in a car accident. Rachel was 18 years old when her sister, 20 years old, died.

In the Society

Presbyterial

The 85th Annual Meeting of **Kamloops** Presbyterial was held May 29th and 30th, 2001 at I.M.H. Retreat Centre at Cache Creek, B.C.

President Morag Hanning welcomed everyone with a special welcome to Betty Siverns, Synodical President.

The meeting was constituted with prayer. Guest speaker Rev. Rod Ferguson of Prince George was introduced. The theme chosen was *Discerning Our Gifts - what are you good for?*

Kay Mori led the opening devotions on the first day of meetings with Gwen Gamble and Helen Dobie leading the following day.

In his opening session the guest speaker encouraged everyone to be aware of their gifts quoting from Matthew 5: "Let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works."

Joyce Armstrong led us in a sing-song and Kay Mori reported on her visit to Council 2001. Cards were signed for members who were absent due to illness.

Joan Monteith was thanked for her attendance at Presbytery as Presbyterial representative and also for agreeing to continue in this office.

Betty Siverns installed the new executive for 2002.

The meetings concluded with a Communion service led by Rev. Rod Ferguson.

On March 2 and 3 the WMS of **Calgary-Macleod** Presbyterial gathered for our 87th Annual Meeting at Knox Presbyterian Church in Calgary, Alberta. On the Friday evening we attended a Service of Remembrance and celebrated Holy Communion.

Saturday morning began with a short but very meaningful worship service led by Heather Bradley of the Mavis Hyndman WMS group of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Calgary. President Priscilla Towers welcomed us all and we received greetings from Bill Ross of Knox Church as well as from Marg Befus of the Alberta and NorthWest Synodical. During breaks in the business meeting we were led in music and song by Sheila Kirkland and Cheri Kay.

After lunch we welcomed two guest speakers - the Rev. Drew Strickland and June Stevenson. Drew is the minister of Calgary's newest Presbyterian church called "Anam + Chara". This is a Gaelic phrase meaning "soul friend". Drew gave us the background on the development of this congregation. June delighted us all with tales of her travel experiences to Africa, Cuba, Central America and the Middle East. She also explained how Glad Tidings is produced and reinforced the purpose of the magazine which is to "inform, educate, inspire and move people to action".

Our 87th annual gathering was then closed with a service of installation for the new and returning officers.

Bruce-Grey Presbyterial annual Fall Rally, hosted by S. Andrew's WMS, Swinton Park, was held on September 18. Sixty-two members attended representing 14 WMS groups.

President Eleanor Crabtree, Meaford,

Ontario, called the meeting to order. A candle was lit, and in a moment of silence, we remembered all those affected by the terrorist's actions on September 11.

Kay McCormack, President St. Andrew's WMS, and Rev. Ken Rowland welcomed everyone. Newly appointed area staff Rev. Ann Yee Hibbs led the worship on the day's theme, *Loving Lightly as Laity.*

Michael Hiltz, Swinton Park, treated us with his guitar as he sang a medley of gospel songs and hymns. Rev. Margaret Robertson, WMS Program Secretary, introduced the current study.

Following lunch guest speaker, President, Habitat for Humanity, Mark Leonard discussed the overall objectives, benefits and the inherent complexities of the program. We have a new appreciation of the Christian-based housing ministry.

Local

Madeline Paterson is pictured (below, seated) with six of the Hargrave Taylor WMS women taken at their monthly meeting in May. Madeline and her husband, Rev. David Paterson were retiring from **St. John's, Medicine Hat.**

The women were singing a farewell song to Madeline.

Members of the **Margaret Ramsay Auxiliary of Knox, Leamington** visited with Margaret on June 19, 2001. Pictured below, bottom left, left to right, are Carolyn Reid, Margaret Ramsay, Jane Campbell, Gloria Wasacase, Frances Nugent, Dorothy Edwards and Donna Tabaki.

Photo immediately below shows members of Knox, Leamington on Mission Awareness Sunday.

Recently a WMS Awareness Sunday was observed at **St. Andrew's, Welland, Ontario**. (See photo below.) Those taking part were from left: Nancy Leslie - scripture reading; Dolores McLeod - prayer; Margaret Hicks - children's story; Shirley Barnhart - beadle; and Rev. Ron Sharpe, minister of St. Andrew's.

We can make a difference!

Distribution of emergency food supplies by Action by Churches Together after flooding in Orissa India.

Floods in Orissa India have affected 9.67 million people. What used to be houses and schools are now vast fields of mud. Thousands of hectares of cropland have been destroyed. PWS&D, through Action by Chruches Together (ACT), is there helping distribute food, water, medical supplies and material for shelter. Work has also begun on long term sustainable rehabilitation programs.

Presbyterian World Service & Development
50 Wynford Dr. Toronto ON M3C 1J7 tel: 416-441-1111 or 1-800-619-7301
pwsd@presbyterian.ca www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

Helen Shura died peacefully on September 10, 2001, after a long illness. She is survived by one daughter Carol, Carol's husband, three sons and six great grandsons.

Helen, with her daughter Carol, was a faithful member of the W.A. and WMS of Lakeshore St. Andrew's. Helen was a very shy person who preferred to work in the background, but she and Carol were always willing to help in any way they could at fundraisers and the Annual Roast Beef Dinner.

She will be sadly missed not only by her family but also by all of us at St. Andrew's.

The funeral was held at Essex Funeral Home with Rev. Charles Congram of Lakeshore St. Andrew's conducting the service.

Ruth E. Leckie died at the age of 82 at the La Chaumiere Nursing Home in Puce, Ontario, where she had been a resident for several years. Ruth was a devoted and faithful member the WMS of **Lakeshore St Andrew's** for over 40 years.

She died on August 10, 2001, and her funeral was at Lakeshore St. Andrew's on August 13. Rev. Charles Congram officiated.

Ruth Leckie

One son, Morley, his wife Sharon, three grandsons and six great grandchildren survive Ruth.

Ruth worked tirelessly for the WMS, and until it was impossible for her to drive any more she attended all of the out of town meetings. She was also a Historian for the WMS. We will sadly miss her.

According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), about 35,615 children died from conditions of starvation on September 11, 2001.

RELEVANT STATISTICS
Victims: 35,615 children
Where: poor countries
Special tv programs: none
Newspaper articles: none
Messages from the president: none
Solidarity acts: none
Minutes of silence: none
Victims mournings: none
Organized forums: none
Pope messages: none
Alert level: zero
Military mobilization: none

The gender of God seems to be an" issue" for those who live in a society where women are treated for the most part as people of equal status and opportunity. I received an email the other day from Guy Smagghe (PWS&D staff) on his return from parental leave after the birth of his daughter. Our Canadian society acknowledges the qualities of both parents and the child's need for them. *(Continued on p 47)*

CIRCULATION NEWS

Katherine Allen

Has your group returned the Glad Tidings subscription list to the office? It is helpful for us to have this list by the deadline date of November 1. This will ensure especially that any additions/changes/deletions have been adjusted to the subscription list for the January/February issue. Every year we have to followup on groups which costs us time and money. Subscribers can help by giving their money to the Glad Tidings secretary by the deadline date.

If your group has disbanded, please make sure you return to the office the subscription list we mailed to the Glad Tidings secretary/contact person in August. We need this information in order to make the appropriate adjustments.

A person does not have to belong to a WMS group to subscribe to the magazine. Have you considered giving a gift subscription to a friend, family member or someone in the church such as the minister, youth leader, church school superintendent?

The Glad Tidings is also available in large print and on cassette tape for those who have difficulty reading the regular sized print. The large print is $11.00 and the cassette tape is offered free but donations of $11.00 are accepted to offset the costs of production. Perhaps you know of a shut-in or someone within your congregation who may benefit from this ministry.

Here in El Salvador things are very different. To speak of God as feminine would be to give God the face of subservience and second class status. Perhaps, however, this would be preferable to the heavy handed and macho image of Salvadoran society including that of the majority of churches (spurred on by Pentecostal evangelism).

One of the toughest parts of living away from my culture is having to live with norms which were long ago challenged, fought against and, for the most part, legally defeated. It would be the same as though a free man was to return to a society where he would have to live as a slave.

A woman, for the most part here, is hired for her short skirt and "sexy" body, with no consideration given to her mental ability. Should she dare to display mental ability to the boss she will be immediately dismissed as being an unstable female.

Now, having said this, there are too many countries on this earth where this whole scenario appears with a much more severe and brutal face. Here in El Salvador there are a few brave women who struggle for the ability of women to sustain themselves without male aid, building their own communities for their children, in the hope that the children will learn a new equality of gender and of opportunity. That these women travel about doing their work in remote communities under armed guard tells us something of the danger of this kind of activity, a danger that they readily accept.

What face and attributes do we give God? Male or female, Greek or Jew, slave or free. . . we should all hope that God is all of these and more.

Brenda Patterson,
Santa Ana, El Salvador

IN REMEMBRANCE

Mrs. Sharon Crossley
Mrs. Gladys Duke
Knox, Agincourt, ON

Mrs. Evelyn Kovacs
Mrs. Myra McFarlane
St. Andrew's, Barrie, ON

Wreatha Carruthers
Margaret Parkinson
Knox's Galt, Cambridge ON

Mrs. Marjorie Harvey
Miss Mary McPherson
St. Andrew's Hespeler,
Cambridge ON

Mrs. Anna Crawford
Glencoe, ON

Mrs. Mary McWaters
Gordonville St. Andrew's, ON

Mrs. Nelson (Rita) Napper
Jarvis, ON

Mrs. Eileen Paul
St. David's, Kelowna, BC

Mrs. Lillian Clelland
Knox, Listowell, ON

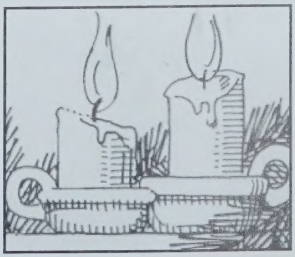
Mrs. Doris Adair
Monkton, ON

Ruth E. Leckie
Helen Shura
Puce ON (formerly Lakeshore St. Andrew's)

Mrs. Irene MacDonald
St. Andrew's, Southampton, ON

Ivy Farrell
St. Andrew's, Welland, ON

Mrs. Mildred McCallum
Argyle (Crinan), West Lorne, ON



Prayer for Peace

For peace in your country
For the victims of violence everywhere
For those struggling for peace and justice
For churches in conflict situations
For a world without war and violence

Lead me from death to life, from falsehood to truth,
Lead me from despair to hope, from fear to trust.
Lead me from hate to love, from war to peace,
Let peace fill our beings, our world and our universe.
Amen.

(World Prayer for Peace from the Vancouver Assembly, World Council of Churches.)

Glad Tidings is printed on recycled paper

Please report any errors/changes in address.